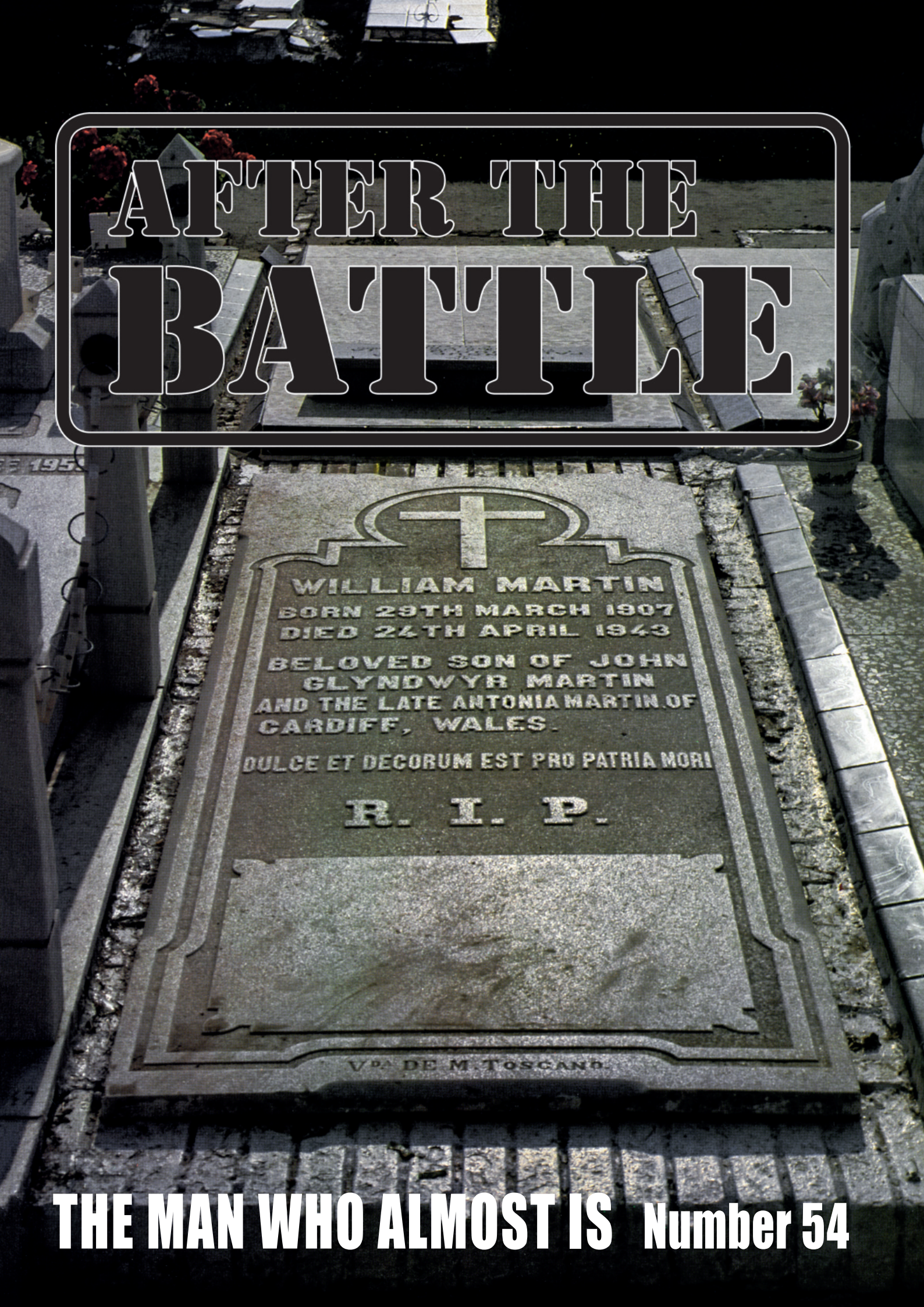
AFTER THE BATTLE



THE MAN WHO ALMOST IS Number 54

AFTER THE BATTLE

NUMBER 54

Edited by Winston G. Ramsey

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CONTENTS

THE MAN WHO ALMOST IS	1
Operation 'Mincemeat'	2
The Public Records	8
The Books	13
The Film	14
Researching the clues	15
The search for the mortuary	20
My interview with Montagu	22
Conclusions	24
WRECK DISCOVERY	
Unknown Maloelap	28
Taroa 1986	31
IT HAPPENED HERE	
The Aarhus Attack	42
CRIME IN WWII	
Show Trial at Luchy	50

Front Cover: The grave in the Cementario de la Soledad in Huelva, Spain of 'Acting Major William Martin' — the 'man who never was'. (Alan Tomkins)

Centre pages: A model A6M2 Zero Y2-176 of the 252 Naval Air Group in the jungle on Taroa Island, Maloelap Atoll, in the Marshall Islands. (William Bartsch)

Back Cover: The grave of Unteroffizier Wilhelm Ross in Beauvais Soldatenfriedhof, north of Paris, France.

Acknowledgements: The Editor's thanks are due to Paul Martin and Jean Hallade for assistance with the feature *Show Trial at Luchy*.

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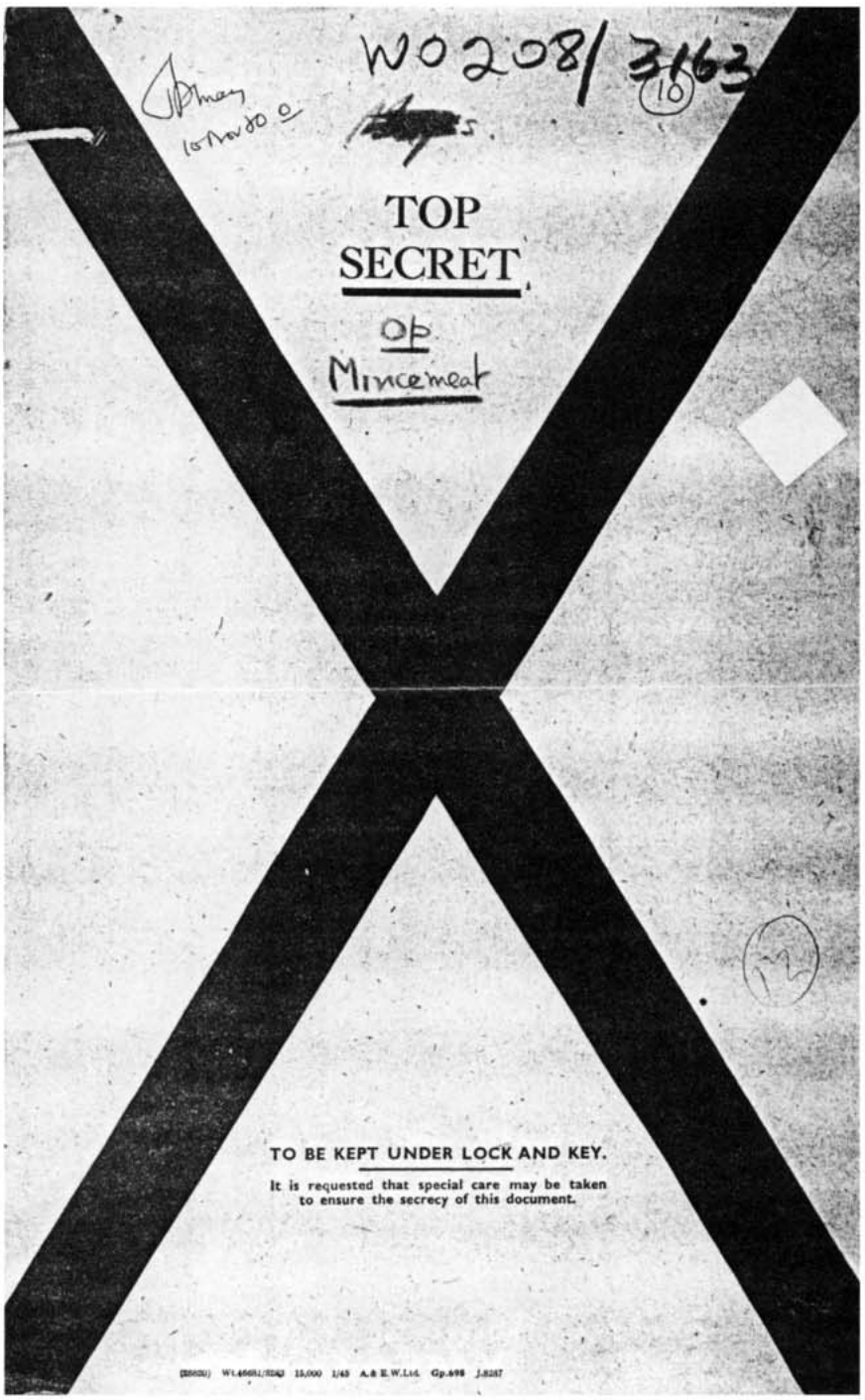

Our research behind Operation 'Mincemeat', more popularly known as 'The Man Who Never Was', first began in 1976 but The Hon. Ewan E. S. Montagu, CBE, QC, DL, soon made it very clear that he claimed carte blanche copyright, stating that 'there is no other source other than my book from which the story of the operation can be obtained with any degree of accuracy'. In addition, he reserved to himself the right to 'pass' anything written on the subject, a condition which any Editor — including this one — would find difficult to accede even though it was of dubious legality. Faced with the absence of any official records, we therefore decided to hold the story until a more opportune time. In the interim, Roger Morgan, our present author, had begun his own independent investigation of the operation and, after we made contact in 1983, we decided to pool our research. The death of Ewan Montagu in 1985 finally left the way clear to go to press without invoking his claim of censorship or incurring the learned judge's displeasure! Roger has spared no effort in his quest to identify the man without a name; before he died Montagu refused to comment, and thus took the secret to his grave. Any confirmation from MI5 files will surely never be forthcoming — hence our title: 'The man who almost is'.

Certified Copy of an Entry of DEATH

within the District of the British Vice-Consulate at Huelva

Application Number PSR 464 H

1943 DEATH within the district of the British Vice-Consulate at Huelva

No.	When and where died (1)	Name and surname (2)	Sex (3)	Age (4)	Rank, profession or occupation and claim to British nationality (5)	Residence at the time of death (6)	Signature, description, and residence of informant (7)	When registered (8)	Signature of consular officer (9)
6	First of May 1943 Found at Punta Umbria Beach drowned	William Martin	Male	36	Major of R.M.	—	—	2nd May 1943	F.K. Haselden Vice-Consul

Buried in Catholic Cemetery Huelva, section of San Marcos-line No. 14 - grave No. 46.

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of the certified copy of an entry in a Register of Deaths in the district above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 2nd day of April 1981.

This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act, 1953 (1 & 2 Eliz. 2, c. 20).
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THE MAN WHO ALMOST IS

BY ROGER MORGAN

On July 20, 1985 there were obituaries in *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* concerning the death of the Hon Ewen Montagu, and a hundred or so people attended a memorial service at the Temple Church on October 23. Judge and wartime intelligence officer, there were only brief mentions of his role in Operation 'Mincemeat', the only deception operation of World War Two to officially become public knowledge. With the Government's decision that the recently commissioned *Official History of Deception* should not at the moment be published it seems likely that it will remain a unique glimpse of this fascinating area, and as such has been a special study of mine.

I have been researching 'Mincemeat' on and off for some five years, and had interviewed Montagu a year before his death. Briefly, Lieutenant-Commander Ewen Montagu (RNVR) and Flight Lieutenant Charles Cholmondeley, who were liaison officers on the committee that ran turned German spies, devised and executed the plan to plant on the German Abwehr false documents designed to make the Germans deploy their defences away from Sicily, just prior to the Allied landings there; the novelty of the plan being the method of delivery — in the briefcase of a waterlogged corpse!

It was this feature, the idea of the British Government officially requisitioning a corpse, that caught my imagination, and I determined if possible to find out his identity, and thus the full story.

'HUELVA ROMAN CATHOLIC CEMETERY. In this cemetery is the grave of a British man who served his country during the Second World War under the assumed rank and name of Major William Martin, Royal Marines, and whose headstone records his date of death as 24th April, 1943. History knows him as "THE MAN WHO NEVER WAS".' Extract from Commonwealth War Graves Common Register for Spain, Volume 7a. Formerly being the responsibility of the Property Services Agency, the grave was taken over by the CWGC in 1977. It is now maintained on their behalf by the German Consulate in Huelva.

Alfred Duff Cooper was one of the leading figures in the pre-war Conservative Government and, together with his beautiful wife Diana, was intimately concerned in the controversy over the marriage of King Edward VIII to Mrs Wallis Simpson, both he and his wife accompanying them on their ill-advised Mediterranean cruise in the *Nahlin* in 1936. In 1943 Duff Cooper was sent as British Representative to the French National Committee in Algiers, and in 1944, when France was liberated, the Coopers moved to Paris where he took up his appointment as British Ambassador. He worked tirelessly to forge Anglo-French unity which culminated in the Treaty of Dunkirk in 1947. When he wrote his book *Operation Heartbreak*, a loosely disguised version of Operation Mincemeat, the Chiefs of Staff looked on it as being a gross breach of the Official Secrets Act as it disclosed the workings of just the sort of operation that the service would have used again. Prime Minister Clement Atlee was approached with a demand that Duff Cooper be prosecuted. Winston Churchill, then Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, is understood to have been equally angry but it was agreed that he could not be indicted while still Ambassador. Instead Duff Cooper was sent a letter stating that if he ever set foot in the United Kingdom as a civilian, he would be prosecuted. When the book appeared as a novel in 1950 it nevertheless gave the first inkling of a successful wartime operation concerning deception at the highest level. However, as far as the general public were concerned, Duff Cooper retired after a distinguished career and was created a Viscount in 1952, taking the title of Norwich. He died two years later. Lady Diana, who survived her husband for more than thirty years, passed away in London in July 1986 aged 93. (Associated Press)

Operation 'Mincemeat'

That this one operation has become public knowledge was due in part to a bizarre factor. For it would seem that after the war Churchill could not resist such a good after-dinner yarn, and so the outline at least must have come to the ears of Alfred Duff Cooper, 1st Viscount Norwich. He had been Secretary of State for War in 1935-7, resigning in protest at Chamberlain's appeasement policy, and was Minister of Information in 1940-2. Seeing immediately the literary potential of such a plot, he wrote a novel, entitled *Operation Heartbreak*, which was published in 1950.

That an ex-minister and diplomat should write a novel was in itself sufficient to ensure it a certain curiosity value, and therefore bring it to public attention. In Duff Cooper's book 'Willie Maryngton' is an orphan who has a second rate military career compared to his grandfather and brother and misses out on all the big shows. He dies of pneumonia, destitute and insane, after seeing his fiancée leaving a brothel. She turns out to be the secretary of the Controller of Deception, who has his offices there! They are scouring pauper lunatic asylums for a body with the help of a civilian medical man, for a special operation. Maryngton is ideal and is used without his girlfriend's knowledge, being promoted from Captain to Major. His girlfriend is asked to write love letters and guesses what for. He is launched from a submarine clutching a packet of pseudo letters from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff which are photographed by the enemy, and the body is eventually handed over to the British Ambassador.

MI5 were horrified at the breach of security, but, according to Cholmondeley (quoted by R. V. Jones in *Most Secret War*), Duff Cooper, then living in Paris, where he had been Ambassador from 1944 to 1947, threatened to say that he had the story direct from Churchill if prosecuted. He died four years later in 1954. The suspicion inevitably grew that such a highly placed member of the Government could well have had a real basis for such a convoluted plot. Several Fleet Street investigative reporters smelled a story and began ferreting.

One of these was Ian Colvin, who when a pre-war Berlin press correspondent had kept Churchill in touch with developments in Germany, and was eventually Deputy Editor of *The Daily Telegraph*. His efforts eventually led him after a long search to the grave of a Major in the Royal Marines in a hilltop cemetery above the Spanish town of Huelva. The name on the slab was William Martin, plucked from the sea in April 1943 bearing a briefcase. Colvin had his story.

Publishing it was another matter, however. The Joint Intelligence Committee considered that some of his deductions, from the limited data available to him, were not only wrong but damaging to Britain's interests (presumably our relationship with Spain) and to pre-empt the issue they set out to get the inside story into print before him. This seems pretty churlish; Colvin had invested a huge amount of effort in ultimately successfully exposing the existence of a decoy corpse; would it not have been more generous to have fully briefed him and let him go ahead with a corrected version?

Ewen Montagu, who had returned to the bar after the war, was asked to write the authoritative account. He had three days in which to write it — Cholmondeley's identity (he was, it would seem, still in MI5) being

When Fleet Street reporter Ian Colvin discovered the grave in Huelva, and thus established that Duff Cooper's novel was actually based on a real life operation, the Joint Intelligence Committee realised that the details could no longer be suppressed. As Charles Cholmondeley, 'the key man' who had thought up the idea of putting doctored documents on a corpse, was still employed by MI5 and thus could not have his identity revealed, Ewan Montagu, who had played a leading part in the operation and who had returned to the bar after the war and was already known to the public by his reputation in court, was selected to be the 'front man' to write and publish the authorised version of Operation 'Mincemeat'. As a result, Cholmondeley's rôle has been pushed into the background and instead the operation has become attributed almost solely to Ewan Montagu. The American actor, Clifton Webb *(right)*, played Lieutenant-Commander Montagu in the film.

The real Montagu pictured when serving in the Naval Intelligence Division.

concealed behind the pseudonym 'George'. With his expertise at preparing rush briefs Montagu worked over a weekend at his cottage on the Solent to produce the story for the Monday deadline of *The Sunday Express* to enable serialisation between February 1 and 22, 1953 with, however, an introduction and analysis by Colvin. The newspaper's editor, Howard Keeble, is credited as being responsible for the classic title, destined to catch the public imagination, of 'The Man Who Never Was'. A riveting design device of a faceless marine stared out from Underground posters everywhere, and the book has never been out of print since.

Colvin, feeling justifiably miffed, was finally shown two heavily weeded files containing nothing not reproduced in Montagu's book, and not let out of the sight of a Security Service officer. Montagu's was a difficult act to follow but Colvin eventually published the story of his search and subsequent treatment in *The Unknown Courier* in 1953.

It was a natural story for the 1950's war-film genre, of course, and soon an Anglo-American Technicolor Cinemascope production by Twentieth Century Fox was shot in Britain and Huelva starring two Americans, Clifton Webb as Montagu and Gloria Grahame as his secretary's flat-mate Lucy, with British actors in the minor roles. Montagu himself played a bit-part as an Air Vice-Marshal acting as devil's advocate against his screen persona! He was thus intimately involved with the film and Hollywood's recreation of 'Mincemeat'.

The film *The Man Who Never Was* opened in London with a Royal Première attended by The Duchess of Kent and Princess Alexandra at the Carlton, Haymarket, on March 14, 1955, and assured the immortality of the story and its unforgettable title. Its stars' careers were not so durable, though, and both failed to develop past the 'fifties. The BBC still has the television rights in this country and last showed the film in 1974. For some reason they evidently do not consider it to be a ratings raiser, unlike for example *Brief Encounter*, which I must have seen at least five times! This seems a pity.

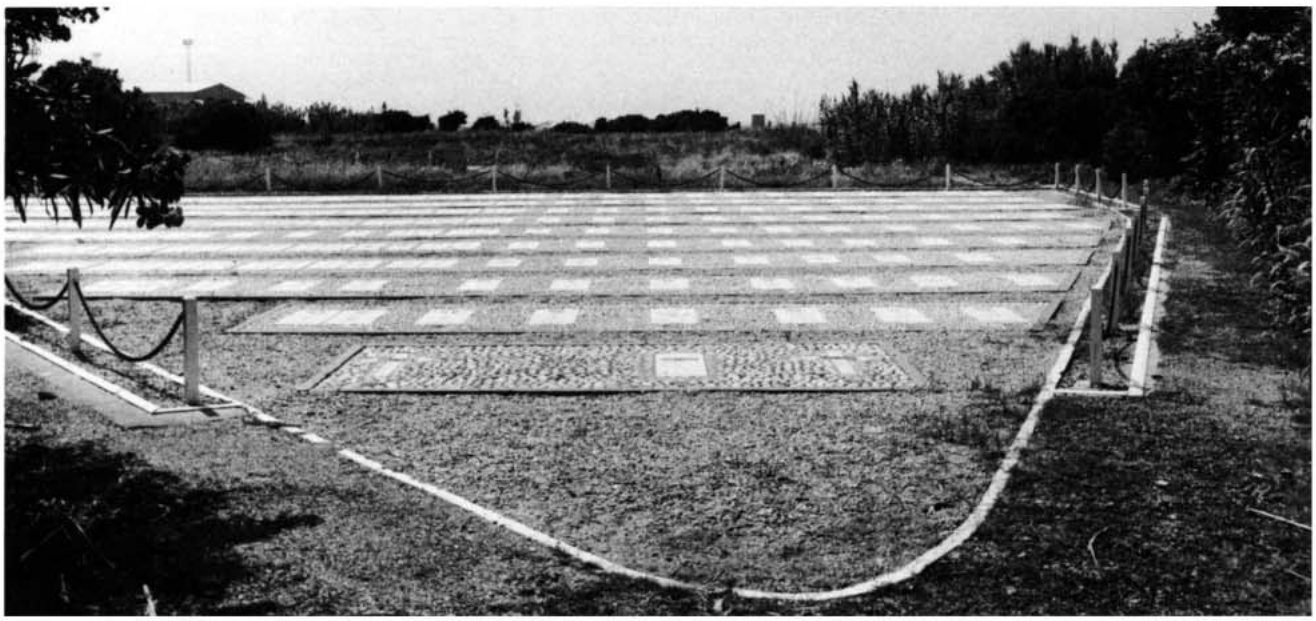
Following the immediate post-war interest in military operations there was a lull until the impending release of the wartime files under the thirty year rule. The end of the 'sixties brought a flood of revelations, principally J. C. Masterman's publication in America (thus evading the necessity of Defence Notice Committee approval) of his account, written immediately after the war as a report for the Security Service, of his chairmanship of the Twenty Committee, *The Double Cross System* (1972), and F. W. Winterbotham's account published in 1974 from memory, of the breaking of the German 'Enigma' machine cypher, *The Ultra Secret*.

In the light of these revelations, and the others that followed from them, it suddenly became evident that much of the basis for previous historical analysis of the conduct of the war could be considered anew. In the aftermath, those that had kept silent so long could at last talk with a guarded tongue, and Montagu published a much fuller account of his wartime role in 1977, *Beyond Top Secret U* ('U' standing for Ultra), one chapter of which filled in some of the background to 'Mincemeat', naming for the first time Charles Cholmondeley, who had by now retired from the Security Service to deal in horticultural machinery in Wells.

The strategic background to the story is too well known to recount in detail. Briefly, the prospect of the Anglo-American 'Torch' landings in North-West Africa in November 1942 helping to lead to the Allies' eventual control of the entire African coastline led the British to consider from a very early stage the future deployment of Allied forces in the Mediterranean in what Churchill envisaged as a campaign to strike at 'the soft underbelly' of Axis Europe — a strategy with which the Americans were not overenamoured. By the time of the Casablanca Conference at Christmas, the future possibilities centred on an invasion of Sardinia or Sicily; possession of either providing the potential for air cover over the Central Mediterranean sea-route and for air and naval operations against Italy. Agreement was reached on Sicily; and, when victory in Africa appeared certain, Churchill strove to ensure that the capture of the island would result in its becoming the springboard for an invasion of Italy itself. Naturally, it had long been foreseen in London that whilst an assault on Sicily was an obvious possible course of future action for the Allies once they held the African coastline, the possibility of Sicily being the Allies' next step was just as obvious to the Germans. That being so, how could the Germans be deceived into thinking otherwise?

Strategic deception, which was highly developed towards the end of the war, was in its infancy. The individual services' schemes were co-ordinated by the London Controlling Section (LCS) newly set up in June 1942, and inexperienced, under the Controller of Deception, Colonel L. C. Bevan. (An account of the LCS, *The Deception Planners*, has been published posthumously by Dennis Wheatley, one of its members.) The LCS moved as time went by from co-ordination to instigation of deception schemes. The main instruments of deception were the turned German agents, run by the Twenty Committee (the number 20 in Roman numerals, XX, representing double-cross) set up in January 1941, which met on Wednesday afternoons at MI6 headquarters, 58 St James's Street. It is officially claimed that no German agents operated clandestinely in this country, they were either executed (the unlucky sixteen, *see After the Battle No. 11*) if their capture was public knowledge or they refused to

Montagu in 1954 during the filming of *The Man Who Never Was* with Clifton Webb on the set. Montagu himself appears in the film where he is seen briefly at a Chiefs of Staff conference playing an unnamed Air Vice-Marshal — the idea, reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's appearances in his own films, being suggested by Mrs Montagu. Charles Cholmondeley was the uncredited technical advisor but no one then realised just who he really was although by the end of the filming the director, Ronnie Neame, had a good idea that he was the real 'George'.



Although Montagu claims that the idea for 'Mincemeat' originated independently, it seems difficult to believe that it was not based on a similar incident which had occurred off Spain in September 1942, more than six months before. In this case a Catalina FP119 of No. 119 Squadron, which left RAF Mountbatten, Plymouth, early on the morning of September 25, crashed in an electrical storm off Cadiz. Apart from the seven-man crew, there were three passengers: Major S. V. Greig, Mr G. D. Marcil and Paymaster-Lieutenant James Turner of the Royal Navy. Turner was carrying a letter addressed to the Governor of Gibraltar, Lieutenant-General Noel Mason-MacFarlane, from General Mark Clark accepting the Governor's offer of accommodation in Government House for the period preceding the 'Torch' landings in North Africa — the proposed date for which was included in the message. General Eisenhower was extremely worried when it was learned that the Spanish had recovered the bodies of Turner and Sergeant Edward Roberts, the Flight Engineer, from the sea. The letter was eventually returned, apparently unopened, yet the similarity with Operation 'Mincemeat' strains the bounds of coincidence too far. Eventually five of the crew were recovered and handed back at Gibraltar: the pilot, Pilot Officer Thomas Wright; flight engineer, Sergeant Edward Roberts; second pilot, Sergeant Harry Nuttall; WOP/AG Sergeant Alex Watt and air gunner, Flight Sergeant Lesley Marjoram. All were buried at sea on October 3 except Roberts and Wright who had already been interred at North Front cemetery on September 28. Major Grieg and Mr Marcil were finally recovered on October 7. One mystery remains: Lieutenant Turner is stated in official records as having been buried at sea, a cryptic post-war 'presumption' memo stating that only two bodies were recovered and that Turner was 'lost at sea'. Today the CWGC North Front Register lists Lieutenant Turner as being buried in Plot 2 *(above)* **in Joint Grave 2 of Row E (6th row back on the extreme left).**

co-operate, or they were operated back to Germany under control (thirty-nine effective long-term agents). A recent claim by Leonard Mosley in his twenty-sixth book, *The Druid*, that a single SS agent (as opposed to the normal Abwehr agents) escaped the net was vehemently refuted by Montagu in a television interview.

As the inception of the idea is described in Montagu's *The Man Who Never Was* (although not mentioned in *Beyond Top Secret U*), it stemmed from a discussion some months before the problem of how to dupe the Germans over Sicily arose. The discussion had centred on whether or not a German report was genuine or a plant, and Cholmondeley had come up with an idea for inducing the Germans to try a double-cross, so that their methods could be studied — his idea being to parachute a corpse as an agent with a wireless set into occupied France. Later, when 'we' (in *Beyond Top Secret U* Montagu is able to refer openly to the Twenty Committee) were puzzling over the Sicily problem, Montagu's account relates, 'the penny suddenly dropped' for Montagu with the idea which came to him of floating a corpse ashore in Spain with fake documents as if from a ditched aircraft. Officially Spain was neutral, but actually pro-German; the corpse could not be closely examined by the Germans but there was a reasonable certainty that any documents carried by it would be.

Neither the idea of using a corpse for such a purpose nor the supposed scenario was original however. For in August 1942 'A' Force (deception Middle East) had planted a map on the Germans before the battle of Alam Halfa by using a corpse. He had been placed in a blown-up scout car, for the Germans to find, in a minefield facing the 80th Light Division just south of Quaret el Abd. Clutched in his hand was a map of other, more fictitious, minefields, and Rommel's panzers were thereby routed into an area of soft sand and bogged down. It has been suggested that the corpse used was the 'Major Smith' whose briefcase was rifled by the German Condor mission while he was being 'entertained' by bellydancer Mlle Aekmet Fahmy on her Nile houseboat at Zamalek. Also, in September 1942 a Catalina carrying courier Paymaster-Lieutenant James Hadden Turner of the Royal Navy crashed off Cadiz, and his body was recovered from the beach at Tarifa by the Spanish. In an inner pocket he was carrying a letter from General Mark Clark to the Governor of Gibraltar, which named French agents in North Africa and gave the date of the 'Torch' landings as November 4 (ultimately the 8th). The body was returned by the Admiral of Cadiz with the apparently unopened letter still in his pocket, and a team of technicians was flown out from Britain to determine if the envelope had been opened and the whole operation therefore compromised — it was concluded that it had not. He was buried on Gibraltar, but still featured in the Navy List for the rest of the war. This incident had become confused with 'Mincemeat' by the time Colvin interviewed the Spanish and German participants ten years later, and this accounts for some of the garbled aspects of his version.

In a reply to the Editor of *After the Battle* in November 1976 Montagu stated that they had already conceived the idea of using a floating corpse before the Turner incident took place, and that it 'did not discourage us'. However, it would seem a bit of a chance to try a ruse similar in its main elements to the trick played on the Germans in the Desert and to the accident off Cadiz, especially as the Spanish had apparently acted correctly when Lieutenant Turner's body floated ashore six months before.

In any case they had to deliberately obtain a suitable corpse — which had to be undamaged and without an obvious cause of death. Sir Bernard Spilsbury, the eminent inter-war forensic pathologist, then approaching the end of his career, was consulted and recommended a pneumonia victim, as the lungs would be full of fluid which he assured Montagu a post-mortem carried out in Spain by anyone of lesser talent than himself would fail to distinguish from sea-water! Other possible causes of death included exposure and shock.

Spilsbury worked almost exclusively by this time for the coroner Bentley Purchase, a similarly larger than life figure. This pair were co-operative with the Security Service in smoothing over at least two other deaths. The first was of William Rolf, who gassed himself in June 1940 after being recruited as a genuine Abwehr spy by the half-hearted double agent Arthur Owens (code-named 'Snow' by the British). Spilsbury gave the cause of death as a heart attack — this was not necessarily untrue as I understand this may happen, but it could indicate a willingness to distort the truth in the service of security. The second was Paul Manoel, found hanged in January 1943 in the basement of the Free French Intelligence Service (the BCRA) at 10 Duke Street, after being subjected to heavy interrogation as a suspected agent. The subsequent inquest was cursory in the extreme.

It was Purchase and/or Spilsbury who eventually produced in November 1942 the corpse of a pneumonia victim in his mid-thirties. His family agreed to him being used

for unknown purposes on condition that his name should never become known, and that he received a Christian burial. He was put into refrigerated storage and eventually embarked on HM Submarine *Seraph*, commanded by Lieutenant-Commander N. L. A. Jewell, for launching off the coast of Spain on her return passage to Gibraltar in April 1943, with the briefcase containing the false documents — personal letters from top brass in London — intended for the Abwehr.

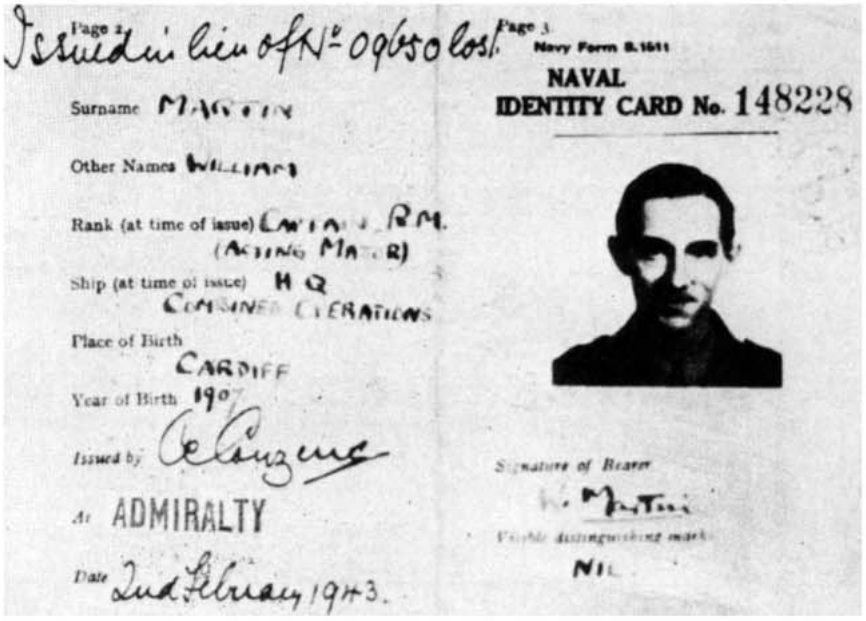
Because of the uncertainty over whether the fingers of the corpse could be relied upon to clutch the briefcase placed in their grip, the briefcase was attached to a leather-covered chain such as worn by bank messengers down their sleeves to prevent valuables from being snatched out of their hands; and, as Major Martin, for greater comfort on a long flight, might reasonably have detached the briefcase dangling from his arm and looped the chain through the belt of his trench-coat, this was the method adopted for ensuring that corpse and briefcase arrived in Spain together.

Central to the deception was a concocted letter from the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Sir Archibald Nye, to Eisenhower's Deputy in the Mediterranean and Allied land forces commander, General Sir Harold Alexander. This was intended to cause the Germans to believe that two operations were in the offing: an assault on Greece by forces in the eastern Mediterranean under the command of General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson (C-in-C Middle East) and another, its objective not stated, by forces in North Africa under Eisenhower and Alexander. In essence, it was explained that Wilson could not have Sicily as the cover target for the Greek landings since Sicily had already been chosen as cover for the other operation, code-named 'Brimstone'; and whereas the Germans might well be made to think that Sicily was the objective of preparations for 'Brimstone', it was hardly likely that they could be led to believe that preparations in the eastern Mediterranean were also directed at the island, which was why Wilson would need to select somewhere nearer to Greece for his cover plan. For good measure, in case the Germans were to pick up the genuine 'Husky' code-name for the invasion of Sicily, 'Husky' was used in Nye's letter as the code-name for the fictitious Greek operation.

To get the Germans to make a connection between 'Brimstone' and Sardinia, a somewhat feeble joke about sardines was inserted into a letter purportedly from the Chief of Combined Operations, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, to the naval C-in-C Mediterranean, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, and this letter conveyed to the Germans the reason for Major Martin being flown out to North Africa. An officer with an expert knowledge of seaborne operations, he was the ideal man to be sent on loan to Cunningham for the assault that was being planned.

In his pockets were the items with which his 'live' personality was created — love letters from the young lady to whom he had only recently become engaged and her photograph, letters from his father regarding a marriage settlement, a curt warning from

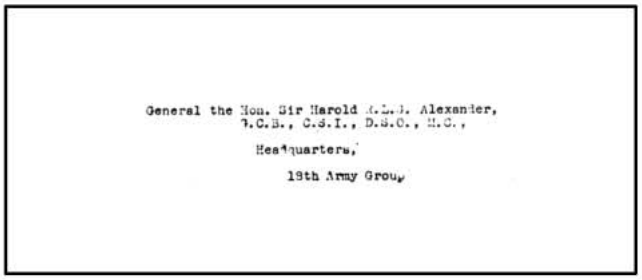
Where serving.	Name.		Rank.	Seniority.
101st RM Bde	Martin A. ...	RM	L	*15 Nov 42*
St Vincent	Martin A. E. J. ...		Cd B	*Retd.*
	Martin A. H.		L	16 Sept 41
Euryalus ...	Martin A. H.		L	10 June 36
	Martin A. J. ...	RAN	Ch	*Emgcy.*
Landrail ...	Martin A. M.		L Cr	*Retd.*
	Martin A. M.		L	*Retd.*
Bermuda ...	Martin A. R.		Cd Gr	1 Apr 42
Stadacona	Martin B. C.	RCN	Ch	*8 Jan 40*
DY Durban	Martin B. C. S. (*Commodore 2nd Class*)	DSO	C	30 June 35
Cerberus ...	Martin B. S.	RAN (*act*)	W Eng	1 Apr 42
	Martin C. A.		W Eng	*19 May 41*
Gosling ...	Martin C. E. ...	RM	L	*11 Sept 41*
RM Eng Bn Lochailort	Martin C. L. H.	RM	L	*17 Aug 42*
Howe ...	Martin C. W. T. ...		W Sh	15 Sept 39
P216 ...	Martin D. D'A. ...		Mid	1 May 42
	Martin D. S. R. ...		L	23 Sept 36
	Martin D. T. R. ...		S L (A)	20 June 41
Ryl Arthur	Martin D. W. ...		W W	28 Apr 41
Argus ...	Martin E. B.,	MRCS, LRCP	Sg L	1 Oct 37
	(*Act. Surg. Lieut.-Com.*)			
	Martin E. E. C.	(*act*)	Gr (T)	*15 Dec 42*
MNBDO(1)	Martin E. K. ...	RM	2nd L	*13 Dec 42*
	Martin F.		WWdr	10 Sept 37
St Angelo	Martin F. T.		W S O	*3 Sept 41*
	Martin G.		Cd Gr	1 Apr 41
Lowestoft	Martin G. E. ...		Gr	*26 Nov 41*
NH Cholmondley Castle	Martin G. N.		W Wdr	*21 Mar 41*
Warspite ...	Martin G. T.		L Cr	21 Apr 42
E-in-CD ...	Martin H. A. ...	DSC	L Cr(E)	1 Feb 40
Birmingham	Martin H. E.		Gr	1 Apr 40
Tyne ...	Martin H. J.		Gr (T)	*18 Apr 40*
Vernon ...	Martin H. J.		L	*Retd.*
Vernon ...	Martin H. N. ...	BSc	Schm	*20 Nov 41*
Indomitable	Martin J. C. G. ...		L Cr	16 Jan 39
Talbot ...	Martin J. D.		L	19 Mar 37
Rhyl ...	Martin J. E. L. ...		L	16 Nov 39
Amarapoora	Martin J. H. B.,	MD, BCh	Sg C	*Retd.*
Uganda ...	Martin J. K.		Gr	1 Apr 40
President III	Martin J. L. ...	(*act*)	Gr	*21 Nov 42*
Ramillies	Martin J. O.		L Cr	1 Feb 39
101st RM Bde	Martin K. ...	RM	L	*17 Nov 41*
S/MCO Cse	Martin K. H. ...		L	1 June 41
Suffolk ...	Martin M.		L (E)	16 Apr 41
King George V	Martin M. D.		P Mid	1 May 42
Jackdaw ...	Martin N. O. H. ...		WAO	1 Apr 38
	Martin P. C. S.	RAN	Mid	1 Jan 40
RM Div Arty	Martin P. F. ...	RM	L	*11 Sept 41*
St Christopher	Martin P. G.	RAN	ASL	1 Sept 42
Bermuda...	Martin P. L. ...	(*act*)	W Sh	*13 Sept 41*
Pursuivant	Martin R. B.		Cr	*Retd.*
Lightning	Martin R. C. E. ...		Gr	1 Apr 41
Ramillies	Martin R. D.		W Sh	15 Sept 41
Xlent ...	Martin R. H.		P L	1 June 41
Caroline ...	Martin R. P. ...	DSC	L Cr	*Retd.*
Defiance III	Martin R. W. J. ... (*Acting Commander*)		L Cr	*Retd.*
	Martin S. G. L. ...		Gr (T)	*18 Nov 40*
Defiance ...	Martin S. H.		LCr(E)	*Retd.*
	Martin S. W. H. ...		Cd Gr	1 Jan 38
Euryalus ...	Martin S. W. P.	BSc	Schm	26 Sept 37
Quebec ...	Martin Terence L. ...		L	16 Jan 42
Quebec ...	Martin Thomas L. ...		L	1 May 41
RMBeach Bn	Martin W. ...	RM	S M	*18 Apr 41*
MNBDO(1)	Martin W.	RM (*act*)	S M	*19 Jan 42*
Loch Nevis	Martin W. C.		B(C/M)	*8 Oct 40*
	Martin W. H.	RAN	Cr	31 Dec 39
Striker ...	Martin W. H. N. (*Tempy. Major*)	RM	C	1 Apr 37
Adventure	Martin W. M. C. ...		L	1 Sept 39
MNBDO(2)	Martin W. S. ...	RM	L	*14 Apr 42*
NH Colombo	Martindale D. F. A.		WWdr	*16 Apr 41*



The identity. Having been given approval to carry out the deception, it was necessary to create an identity which could stand up to the closest scrutiny when the Spanish and, it was hoped, German Intelligence examined the corpse. The weakest link was that the enemy would undoubtedly be in possession of a copy of the Navy List for 1942 and so be able to cross-check the fictitious Identity Card *(above)* with the real names already printed in the List *(left)*. If he were to be a Royal Navy officer, it would be necessary to provide him with a tailored uniform but the necessity of bringing in a tailor to measure up a corpse was considered far too risky for the security of the mission. So, by making him a Royal Marine officer, he could be dressed in ordinary battledress, yet still be under Naval jurisdiction. There were several Royal Marines with the name 'Martin' and, without his knowledge of course, Major William Hynd Norrie Martin was chosen to give his identity to the dead man. As it was not possible to take a lifelike portrait of the corpse, another officer who was a good look-alike was photographed and his picture mounted on the Identity Card.

	1937			
Po	George Barclay Grant (*Act. Lt.-Col. 11 Mar. 41*) (*a*)	1 Mar	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1939
Ch	Donald Harry William Sanders (*Act. Maj. 16 Feb. 40*)	31 Mar	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940
Po	Frank Alfred Eustace (*a*)	1 Apr	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1938
Po	(P) William Hynd Norrie Martin (*Tempy. Maj. 6 Feb. 41*)	1 Apr	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1939
P	David Lionel Cranford Duncan (*at*) (*Act. Maj. 31 Dec. 42*)	24 Apr	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940
Ch	Bernard William de Courcy-Ireland (*Act. Maj. 6 Aug. 42*)	24 Apr	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940
	John Lampen (*g*) (*Supy. 27 Jan. 39*) ...	24 Apr	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940
Pi	(P) Arthur Richard Burch, D.S.C. (*Tempy. Maj. 6 Feb. 41*)	24 May	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940
Ch	Reginald Carteret de Mussenden Leathes (*Act. Maj. 1 Jan. 41*)	7 June	*Lt.-Cr.*	1 Sept 1940

The documents. Convincing the Germans of the authenticity of the actual 'planted' documents gave Naval Intelligence much food for thought; they must not be too blatant in disclosing details of Operation 'Husky' but at the same time they would have to bear the ring of truth, albeit that the intention was to deceive the Germans as to the actual landing area and turn their attention to Sardinia as being the target instead of Sicily.

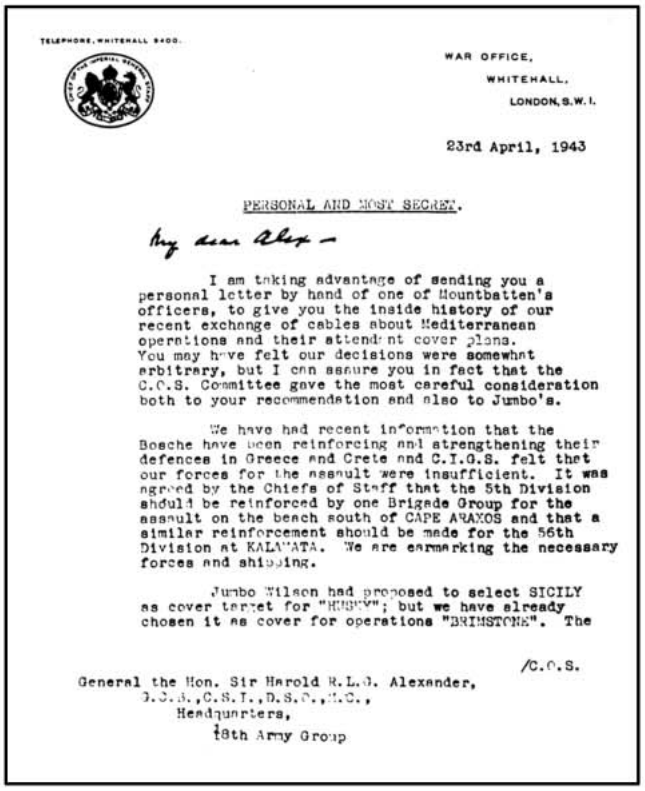


General the Hon. Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander,
K.C.B., C.S.I., D.S.O., M.C.,

Headquarters,

18th Army Group

There were three letters designed to create the right scenario. The main deception information was contained in this letter from General Sir Archibald Nye, the Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to General Sir Harold Alexander, since February 19 commander of the 18th Army Group with his headquarters at Constantine, Tunisia. (AFHQ was at Algiers.) Possibly no letter ever written has had so much time spent over its drafting. Cleverly worded, it even 'revealed' that the Allies were going to try to convince the Germans that they were going to invade Sicily — its beauty being that if details of the real operation got out, the enemy would think it was a deliberate leak to deceive them! Montagu records that far from the problem of trying to mislead the German High Command, his greatest difficulty was persuading their British opposite numbers that it could actually be done.



TELEPHONE, WHITEHALL 8400.

WAR OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
LONDON, S.W.1.

23rd April, 1943

PERSONAL AND MOST SECRET.

My dear Alex -

I am taking advantage of sending you a personal letter by hand of one of Mountbatten's officers, to give you the inside history of our recent exchange of cables about Mediterranean operations and their attendant cover plans. You may have felt our decisions were somewhat arbitrary, but I can assure you in fact that the C.O.S. Committee gave the most careful consideration both to your recommendation and also to Jumbo's.

We have had recent information that the Boche have been reinforcing and strengthening their defences in Greece and Crete and C.I.G.S. felt that our forces for the assault were insufficient. It was agreed by the Chiefs of Staff that the 5th Division should be reinforced by one Brigade Group for the assault on the beach south of CAPE ARAXOS and that a similar reinforcement should be made for the 56th Division at KALAMATA. We are earmarking the necessary forces and shipping.

Jumbo Wilson had proposed to select SICILY as cover target for "HUSKY"; but we have already chosen it as cover for operations "BRIMSTONE". The

/C.O.S.

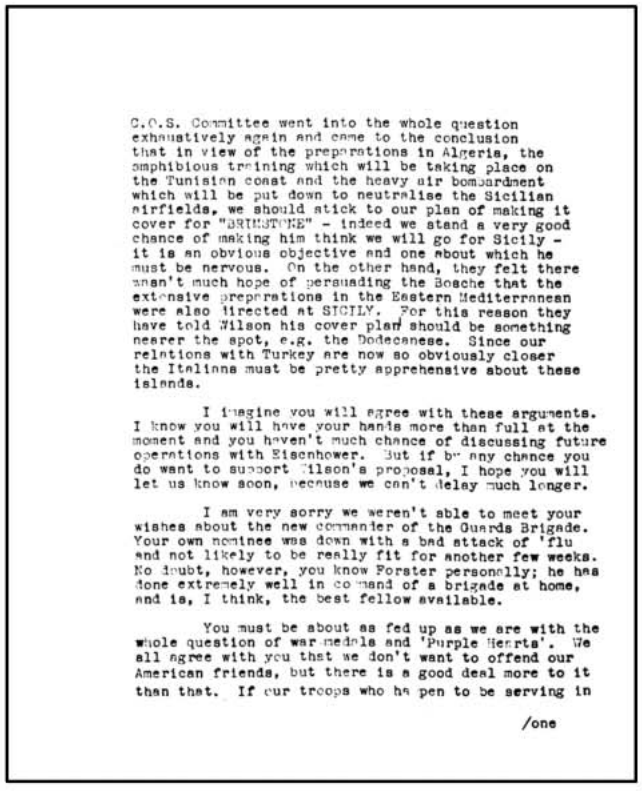
General the Hon. Sir Harold R.L.G. Alexander,
K.C.B.,C.S.I.,D.S.O.,M.C.,
Headquarters,
18th Army Group

his bank manager about his overdrawn account, bills for an engagement ring and for a shirt, theatre ticket stubs, a pass to Combined Operations Headquarters (in need of renewal, so as not to make him appear too much of a paragon of military virtue), a letter from his solicitors confirming the drawing up of a will and much else.

Lieutenant-Commander Jewell successfully launched the corpse off Huelva and all turned out as had been hoped — there being a delay in the return of the documents, with the Germans coming into possession of copies and assessing them as genuine. The body was hurriedly buried under a massive marble slab in the semi-circular cemetery on the crest of the ridge above Huelva by the British Vice-Consul, who registered his death in the normal manner. As Montagu also inserted his death in the official lists he has a second death certificate. The slab was inscribed in Latin, 'It is a Sweet and Fitting Thing to Die for One's Country.'

The success of the deception was relayed by telegram on December 14, 1943 to Churchill in Washington by Roger Hollis, an Assistant Director of MI5 (later to become its head from 1956 to 1965 and an alleged Soviet spy). 'Mincemeat', Hollis reported, had been swallowed 'rod, line and sinker.' Large German troop dispositions took place to cover the fictitious threats, and total surprise was achieved as British and American forces came ashore on an ill-defended Sicily on June 10, 1943.

Besides Montagu's books, there are two others with brief but primary information. *The Double Cross System* reproduces in a footnote the minutes of the Twenty Committee meeting that adopted the operation, and *The Secret War of Charles Fraser-Smith* details Fraser-Smith's provision of the Mae-



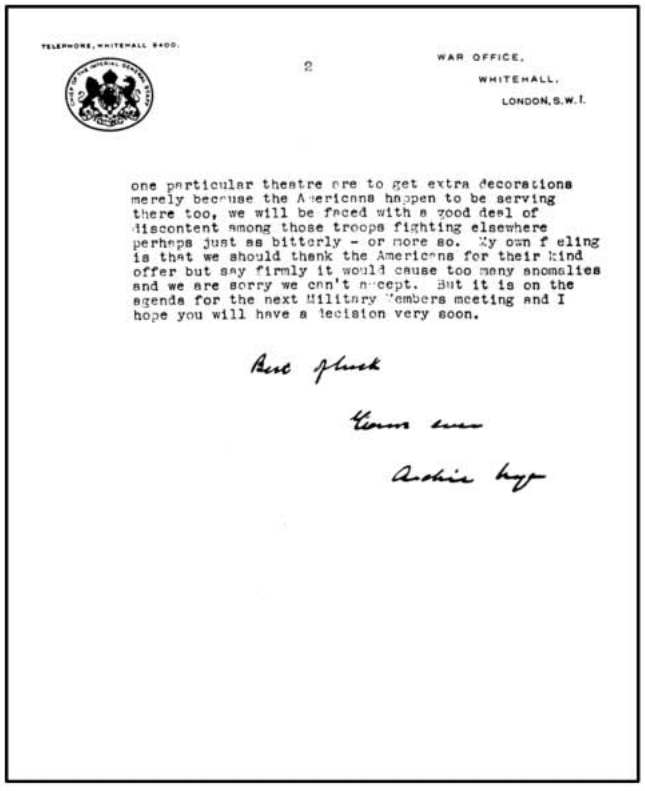
C.O.S. Committee went into the whole question exhaustively again and came to the conclusion that in view of the preparations in Algeria, the amphibious training which will be taking place on the Tunisian coast and the heavy air bombardment which will be put down to neutralise the Sicilian airfields, we should stick to our plan of making it cover for "BRIMSTONE" - indeed we stand a very good chance of making him think we will go for Sicily - it is an obvious objective and one about which he must be nervous. On the other hand, they felt there wasn't much hope of persuading the Boche that the extensive preparations in the Eastern Mediterranean were also directed at SICILY. For this reason they have told Wilson his cover plan should be something nearer the spot, e.g. the Dodecanese. Since our relations with Turkey are now so obviously closer the Italians must be pretty apprehensive about these islands.

I imagine you will agree with these arguments. I know you will have your hands more than full at the moment and you haven't much chance of discussing future operations with Eisenhower. But if by any chance you do want to support Wilson's proposal, I hope you will let us know soon, because we can't delay much longer.

I am very sorry we weren't able to meet your wishes about the new commander of the Guards Brigade. Your own nominee was down with a bad attack of 'flu and not likely to be really fit for another few weeks. No doubt, however, you know Forster personally; he has done extremely well in command of a brigade at home, and is, I think, the best fellow available.

You must be about as fed up as we are with the whole question of war medals and 'Purple Hearts'. We all agree with you that we don't want to offend our American friends, but there is a good deal more to it than that. If our troops who happen to be serving in

/one



TELEPHONE, WHITEHALL 8400.

2

WAR OFFICE,
WHITEHALL,
LONDON, S.W.1.

one particular theatre are to get extra decorations merely because the Americans happen to be serving there too, we will be faced with a good deal of discontent among those troops fighting elsewhere perhaps just as bitterly - or more so. My own feeling is that we should thank the Americans for their kind offer but say firmly it would cause too many anomalies and we are sorry we can't accept. But it is on the agenda for the next Military Members meeting and I hope you will have a decision very soon.

Best luck

Yours ever

Archie Nye

The second letter provided the reason for Major Martin's visit. Signed by Lord Louis Mountbatten at Combined Operations Headquarters, it introduced the joking reference to Sardinia which it was hoped would appeal to the German sense of humour.

West and the canister used to transport the body; however, he dates this to 'the early winter of 1943' — he must in fact mean 1942.

Subsequent writers in describing the operation have made use of Montagu's account, with detail added from unspecified sources. Nigel West (Rupert Allason) in *MI5* for example says that the cold-storage used was the Westminster Public Mortuary in Horseferry Road (presumably selected because it was the nearest to Whitehall), and J. Piekalkiewicz's *Secret Agent, Spies and Saboteurs*, the most detailed non-primary account, has photographs which purport to be of the corpse in a hospital mortuary and on the deck of the fishing boat that recovered it off Huelva, all of which were dismissed as false by Montagu in a letter to *After the Battle* in 1976. Montagu was subsequently paid substantial damages by the publishers for breach of copyright.

I must first have read Montagu's *The Man Who Never Was* in the early 'sixties, and like most people it fired my imagination. I suppose I am basically nosey, but I like knowing facts which are not generally known; any sort of fact — knowledge for its own sake. I have a suspicion that most facts are publicly discoverable with sufficient effort, and I resolved as an intellectual exercise to see if I could discover the identity of the corpse used in Operation 'Mincemeat', and incidentally any extra information on the whole operation. Although I recognise it is sometimes impossible for an outsider to assess the continuing significance of historical secret information, it does seem inconceivable in this case that the name can have any national ramifications. The initial

In reply, quote R.1924/43.

COMBINED OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS,
14, RICHMOND TERRACE,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

Telephone:
WHitehall 9777

21st April,
1943.

Dear Admiral of the Fleet,

I promised V.C.I.G.S. that Major Martin would arrange with you for the onward transmission of a letter he has with him for General Alexander. It is very urgent and very "hot" and as there are some remarks in it that could not be seen by others in the War Office, it could not go by signal. I feel sure that you will see that it goes on safely and without delay.

I think you will find Martin the man you want. He is quiet and shy at first, but he really knows his stuff. He was more accurate than some of us about the probable run of events at Dieppe and he has been well in on the experiments with the latest barges and equipment which took place up in Scotland.

Let me have him back, please, as soon as the assault is over. He might bring some sardines with him - they are "on points" here!

Yours sincerely,

Louis Mountbatten

Admiral of the Fleet Sir A.B. Cunningham, G.C.B.,D.S.O.,
Commander in Chief Mediterranean,
Allied Force H.Q.,
Algiers.

In reply, quote S.R.1949/43.

COMBINED OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS,
14, RICHMOND TERRACE,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

Telephone:
WHitehall 9777

22nd. April, 1943.

Dear General,

I am sending you herewith two copies of the pamphlet which has been prepared describing the activities of my Command; I have also enclosed copies of the photographs which are to be included in the pamphlet.

The book has been written by Hilary St. George Saunders, the English author of "Battle of Britain", "Bomber Command" and other pamphlets which have had a great success both in this country and yours.

The edition which is to be published in the States has already enjoyed pre-publication sales of nearly a million and a half and I understand the American authorities will distribute the book widely throughout the U.S. Army.

I understand from the British Information Service in Washington that they would like a "message" from you for use in the advertising for the pamphlet and that they have asked you direct, through Washington, for such a message.

I am sending the proofs by hand of my Staff Officer, Major W. Martin of the Royal Marines. I need not say how honoured we shall all be if you will give such a message. I fully realise what a lot is being asked of you at a time when you are so fully occupied with infinitely more important matters. But I hope you may find a few minutes time to provide the pamphlet with an expression of your invaluable approval so that it will be read widely and given every chance to bring its message of co-operation to our two peoples.

We are watching your splendid progress with admiration and pleasure and all wish we could be with you.

You may speak freely to Major Martin in this as well as any other ...

other matters since he has my entire confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Louis Mountbatten

General Dwight Eisenhower,
Allied Forces H.Q.,
Algiers.

It was vital that the letter should not get lost at sea but this was a real possibility if they were inserted in a pocket on the corpse. A briefcase, chained to the owner, would enhance the idea of security as well as ensuring safe delivery of the fake documents, but might the Germans be suspicious if it was found to contain only two letters? A third was therefore provided addressed to General Eisenhower to substantiate the provision of the case as being necessary to carry the proofs of the American edition of the Combined Operations publication by Hilary St George Saunders.

insistence on secrecy by the relatives must have been for purely personal reasons; Montagu, by his oath, was permanently debarred from revealing the name, but with the death of all the participants my own view is that these considerations ought surely to lapse.

The information is of course in the single archive file in the records of one of the intelligence organisations. Unfortunately, in the absence of a Freedom of Information Act such as that introduced in the United States, blanket secrecy surrounds these records, which on the grounds of national security are retained by their originating departments under Section 3(4) of the Public Records Act 1958, apparently indefinitely. Other public records, which relate to named individuals for example, have been transferred to the Public Records Office, but are closed for 100 years (at least one knows that they will eventually be disclosed); yet others, for example the war diaries, are open after an undertaking is given that no personal information will be divulged.

The Public Records

I therefore decided to start my search in the public records, in the hope that some crumbs had escaped the weeding of the Departmental Records Officers.

The highest clearance below Churchill must have been the Chief of Staff's Committee. The minutes are available, and I eventually came upon a reference to the subject of 'Mincemeat' in the 68th to 77th meetings during April 1943. These state:

'7th April. OPERATION MINCEMEAT. The Committee had before them a note on the above Operation, circulated personally to each Chief of Staff. After a full discussion the Committee agreed in principle to the mounting of this Operation and instructed the Secretary to convey their comments to the Controlling Officer with a view to the latter discussing the matter further with the Vice Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

'9th April. The Committee gave further instructions to the Controlling Officer on the Plan.

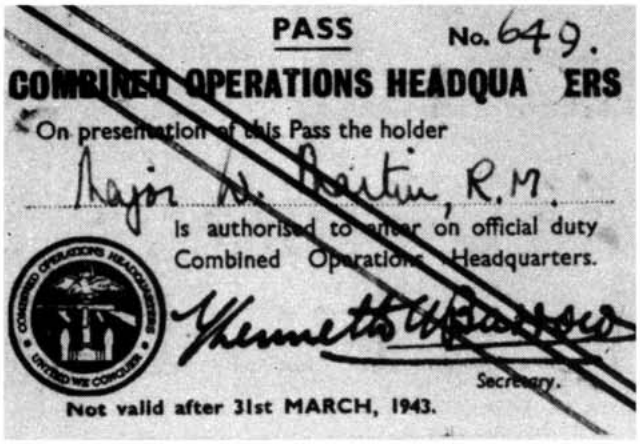
'10th April. The Committee approved the draft Plan, as amended in discussion, and instructed the Secretary so to inform the Controlling Officer.

'14th April. The Committee discussed the procedure to be adopted for informing the Prime Minister of the outline of the proposed Plan, and invited Lieut. General Ismay to take action as proposed. [Memo from Ismay to Churchill: 'The Chiefs of Staff have approved, subject to your consent, a somewhat startling cover plan in connection with HUSKY . . . ']

'15th April. The Committee were informed that the Prime Minister had approved the proposed Plan and had directed that General Eisenhower should also be told. The Secretary was so instructed.'

The supporting details. To complete the deception a variety of personal items were included about the person of Major Martin to give him a credible personality. They were: two identity discs 'Major W. Martin, R.M., R/C' attached to his braces; a silver cross on a chain around his neck; a wrist watch; bunch of keys; packet of Players cigarettes and box of matches; stub of a pencil; odd change; a letter from his 'father'; a letter from 'father' to McKenna & Co, Solicitors; another letter from the same firm; letter from Lloyds Bank; three bills, one from the Naval and Military Club, another from Gieves Ltd (outfitters) and one for an engagement ring; two bus tickets and two counterfoils for theatre tickets for the Prince of Wales for April 22, 1943 and a wallet. This contained a photograph and two letters from 'Pam', his fiancée; a book of stamps; a St. Christopher medallion; an invitation to the Cabaret Club; his Admiralty Identity Card and a pass to Combined Operations Headquarters; a piece of a letter; three £1 and one £5 notes. (One of the illustrations now in file WO106/5921 at the Public Record Office.)

This was the first surprise in clarifying the time-scale, for the body started its journey from cold-storage a mere two days later, on April 17; and in fact Montagu describes how their tactic was to present the Chiefs of Staff with a fait accompli, — with everything ready to 'go' — as the Chiefs of Staff would inevitably think of a thousand reasons why it would be impossible to concoct a letter and prepare a body which would have the remotest chance of deceiving the Germans to negate the newly imposed supervision of the LCS. Jewell has dated his interview with Montagu and Cholmondeley at M16 Headquarters as March 1943, and Montagu's 'operational orders' for Jewell are dated March 31 — Admiral Sir Claude Barry (Flag Officer, Submarines) had authorised *Seraph* to kill time waiting for the go-ahead by working up trials at Holy Loch. Unfortunately the personally circulated details of the operation do not survive in the file, or any


PASS No. 649.

COMBINED OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS

On presentation of this Pass the holder

Major W. Martin, R.M.

is authorised to enter on official duty Combined Operations Headquarters.

Secretary.

Not valid after 31st MARCH, 1943.

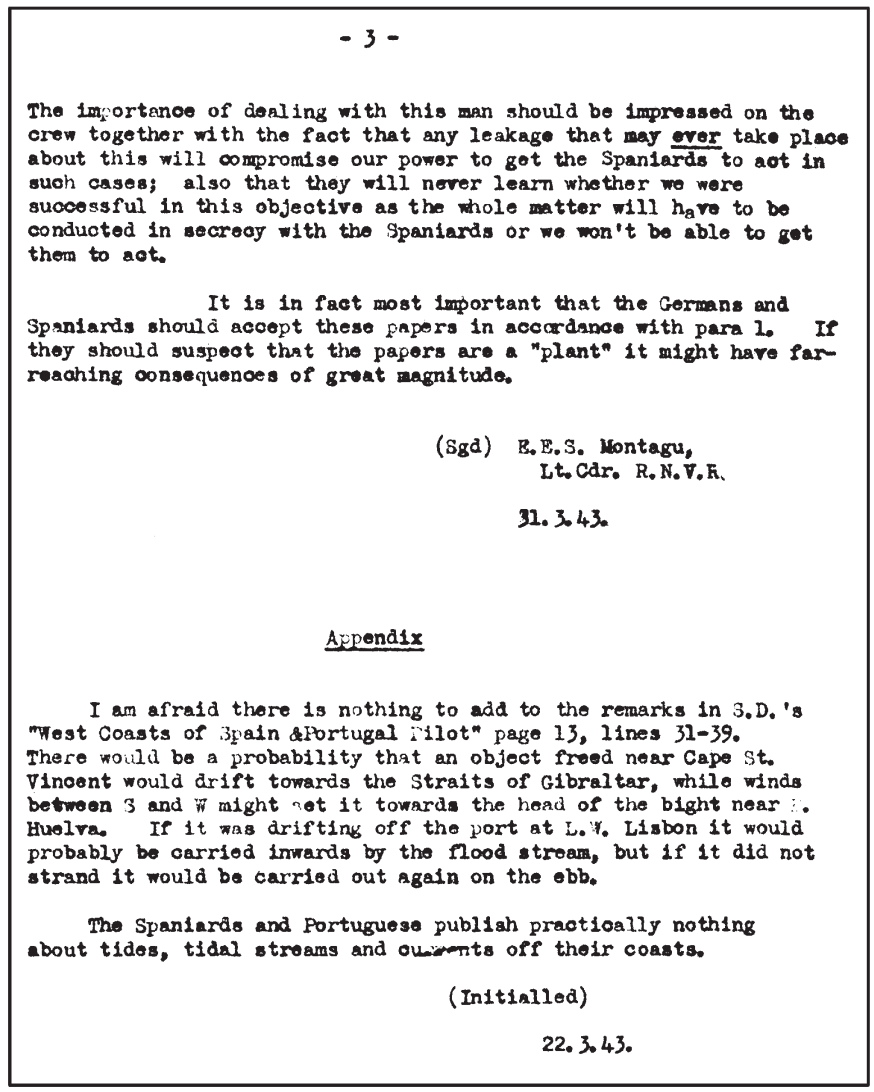
details of the discussion or subsequent amendment of the plan. The record of those present at the Chiefs of Staff meetings does not include Montagu or the Director of Naval Intelligence, who are present in the film version.

Although not transferred to the Public Records, the footnote in *The Double Cross System* of the minutes of the Twenty Committee meeting at which 'Mincemeat' was adopted on February 4, 1943, provides this verbatim summary:

'Plan MINCEMEAT. This plan is the same as TROJAN HORSE. The details of the plan were put forward by Commander Montagu and F/Lt Cholmondeley. It was reported that a body had been procured and it was explained that this would have to be used within three months, and that various points of detail would have to be decided before the Plan could be put into action. The Plan was adopted by the Committee and it was agreed that copies of the Plan should be shown to the Directors of Intelligence; and that the Air Ministry should make the necessary arrangements for the flight during which the body will be dropped; that Major Wingate (LCS) should put the Plan before Colonel Bevan for the D's of P approval [i.e. Bevan's]; that the Admiralty should find out a suitable position off the Spanish coast where the body can be dropped; that the War Office should go into the question of providing the body with a name, necessary papers etc. It was agreed that NA Madrid [Naval Attaché] should be informed so he will be able to cope with any unforseen repercussions.'

This is interesting in that it shows that even at this date, three months after the procurement of the body, 'Mincemeat' was still in essence Cholmondeley's original idea of dropping a corpse ('Trojan Horse'), and that responsibility for the elaborate faking of the identity was assigned to the War Office.

Surprisingly, it appears that 'Mincemeat' was never integrated into the LCS's official plans. 'Barclay', the strategic deception plan for 'Husky', which was approved on April 10, 1943 by the Chief of Staff's Committee and is available in the Public Records Office, contains no mention of it, whilst discussing the methods of planting 'Barclay' piecemeal on the German Secret Service. Neither is it mentioned in the definitive chronicle of the



- 3 -

The importance of dealing with this man should be impressed on the crew together with the fact that any leakage that may ever take place about this will compromise our power to get the Spaniards to act in such cases; also that they will never learn whether we were successful in this objective as the whole matter will have to be conducted in secrecy with the Spaniards or we won't be able to get them to act.

It is in fact most important that the Germans and Spaniards should accept these papers in accordance with para 1. If they should suspect that the papers are a "plant" it might have far-reaching consequences of great magnitude.

(Sgd) E.E.S. Montagu,
Lt.Cdr. R.N.V.R.

31.3.43.

Appendix

I am afraid there is nothing to add to the remarks in S.D.'s "West Coasts of Spain &Portugal Pilot" page 13, lines 31-39. There would be a probability that an object freed near Cape St. Vincent would drift towards the Straits of Gibraltar, while winds between S and W might set it towards the head of the bight near C. Huelva. If it was drifting off the port at L.W. Lisbon it would probably be carried inwards by the flood stream, but if it did not strand it would be carried out again on the ebb.

The Spaniards and Portuguese publish practically nothing about tides, tidal streams and currents off their coasts.

(Initialled)

22.3.43.

The third page of the operational orders for 'Mincemeat', a copy of which is now to be found in the same PRO file, though the dating is somewhat odd — an appendix being added nine days before Montagu signed them on March 31, 1943.

Although Montagu makes it plain that nothing must *ever* leak out, it must have been somewhat ironic that ten years later he found himself a minor film star actually criticising the operation in the screen recreation! Seen here on the right, he faces his film counterpart in a scene depicting a Chief of Staff's meeting attended by Admiral Cross (Laurence Naismith); General Nye (Geoffrey Keen) and Admiral Mountbatten (Peter Williams). The real meeting approving the operation was chaired by Sir Alan Brooke, CIGS; with Sir Dudley Pound, CNS; Sir Charles Portal, CAS, and Sir Hastings Ismay, Churchill's Chief of Staff.

Anglo-American planning for 'Husky' by Richard Leighton in the *US Naval Institute Proceedings*. Masterman says: 'at a later stage the Controller of Deception sponsored the scheme and in May took responsibility for subsequent developments.'

Next I turned to the selection of the code-name. Churchill had decreed that all code-names should be emotionally neutral, non-frivolous and obviously not connected with the operation. Indeed he reserved to himself the selection of the code-words for the major operations such as 'Overlord'. Lists of suitable words were compiled by the Inter-Services Security Board, on which Montagu served as deputy to Commander Ginger Lewis, the Navy representative, and which met every morning in the War Office. They were allocated to the service departments to be used in order. Montagu mentions that the code-name had been reinstated after a previous successful Operation 'Mincemeat', which turned out to be clandestine mine-laying by HMS *Manxman* (the fastest ship in the Navy) under Captain R. K. Dickson in August 1941.

Dickson subsequently became a Rear Admiral and Chief of Naval Information, and made a radio broadcast in May 1945 on his 'Mincemeat' in the series *Now It Can Be Told*. The authorisation procedure he went through for this is interesting (ADM1/17832), in that one has the suspicion that there was confusion in the authorities' minds between the two operations. He had to obtain clearance from the Director of Naval Intelligence and the Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service ('C' — Sir Stuart Menzies) and one of the memos is inscribed 'Sir (W?) [Churchill?] always wanted to hear this story told — B' [Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff?]. Indeed he subsequently got into serious trouble for revealing the code-name (all code-names were supposed to remain secret indefinitely).

I was surprised that code-names were re-used, an obvious contradiction of the whole principle I should have thought. I came to the conclusion that it was a device to obtain even greater security.

The service careers of Montagu, Cholmondeley, and the *Seraph*'s captain Lieutenant-Commander Jewell and his officers are traceable in the Navy and Air Force Lists, which are on open access in the PRO, and in addition we have Montagu's own account.

Montagu (born 1901, second son of Baron Swaythling, Westminster, Harvard, Trinity, Bar Middle Temple 1924), a keen yachtsman and barrister, volunteered for the RNVR in 1938. He was made a King's Counsel six months before war was declared, and was commissioned Lieutenant (acting temporary Lieutenant-Commander) in November 1939 and posted to HMS *Beaver*, the Humber Command, as Assistant Staff Officer (Intelligence). Such was the efficiency with which he reorganised the debriefing of trawler skippers that he was transferred to the Naval Intelligence Department of the Director of Naval Intelligence, Admiral John Godfrey (given the appropriate pseudonym of 'Cross' in the film!). He was Secretary of the W-Board (composed of the Directors of Intelligence of the three services — 15 meetings); nominal deputy to Commander Halahan as naval representative on the Twenty Committee (226 meetings — in fact Halhan left him to it after the first two); deputy to Ginger Lewis as naval representative on the Inter-Services Security Board; and head of Naval Intelligence Division's Section 17M (for Montagu?) dealing with all non-operational 'special intelligence' (mainly deciphered Enigma — top secret Ultra). He conducted a special mission to HMS *Saker*, Washington, in November 1941 to establish a mini-Twenty Committee for double agent 'Tricycle' (Dusko Popov), and returned in February 1942 having secured a job for his wife in Sir William Stephenson's British Security Co-ordination, New York. He was awarded the CBE in 1944. After the war he was appointed Judge Advocate of the Fleet in December 1945, and became a noted and sometimes controversial criminal judge (he was known for his emotional involvement in cases) on the Western Circuit, retiring in 1973.

The body snatchers. Cholmondeley and Montagu turned to the foremost pathologist of the day, Sir Bernard Spilsbury *(left)* whose celebrated career had already spanned four decades. With hundreds if not thousands of post mortems to his credit, covering every possible circumstance of death, he was ideally suited to advise on the type of death which might fool the Spaniards into thinking that the person had died from drowning. To obtain such a body, Sir Bernard picked his close friend, Bentley Purchase *(right)*, the Coroner for the St Pancras District of London, on whom he could rely for close co-operation and secrecy.

Cholmondeley (born in 1917) was commissioned Pilot Officer in November 1939 in the Administration and Special Duties Branch, and rose to Flight Lieutenant (Temporary) in March 1942 — his department being Deputy Director Intelligence, Security, from August 1940. Although Montagu, restricted in what he could say, describes 'George' in *The Man Who Never Was* as one of two Air Ministry representatives on the Twenty Committee, it would seem safe to assume that Cholmondeley was most likely representing MI5. He is listed with the MBE in January 1946, presumably like Montagu's CBE for 'Mincemeat', and was released from the Active List (under AP3093?) in January 1946. In Professor R. V. Jones's *Most Secret War*, published in 1978, Cholmondeley's name had been withheld from the text at the behest of the security authorities, and, as in *The Man Who Never Was*, he is referred to as 'George; but in the Chapter Notes of Jones's book, where the author comments on Cholmondeley's identity having been revealed by Montagu in *Beyond Top Secret U*, Jones refers to Cholmondeley by the rank of Squadron Leader.

Cholmondeley's post-war career in the Security Services is of course not documented, but we gain a further insight into his post-'Mincemeat' wartime activities as an officer in MI5's B1A Division (double-agent running) from *Most Secret War*, in which Jones, as head of Scientific Intelligence, relates how his first opportunity of working with 'George' on a 'grand scale' occurred in

Purchase selected Hackney Mortuary in Mare Street in north-east London as the most suitable centre of operations. It was isolated behind the gates of St John's Churchyard and, in addition, the Superintendent, George Grayling, was an ex-RAMC man who was reliable and could be trusted to keep his mouth shut.

It took Roger Morgan three years' research to pinpoint the correct mortuary after many red herrings. The pictures *above* included in Janusz Piekalkiewicz's book *Secret Agents, Spies and Saboteurs*, published in Germany in 1969 and the UK in 1974, purported to show the corpse *left* in the morgue of a London hospital and, *right*, on the deck of a 'launch' after its recovery from the sea. Piekalkiewicz refused to tell us where he obtained these pictures and Ewan Montagu confirmed in a letter to *After the Battle* in 1976 that the morgue picture was definitely false. Even a cursory examination of the second photograph shows a trawler (note the winch and nets) with a body clothed in Luftwaffe flying kit!

August 1941, when means had to be sought to mislead the Germans about the new bomber radio navigational device 'Gee', one such means being to feed false information via the Abwehr agents in Britain under MI5 control. Jones refers to the time in 1943 when he was again aided by 'George' in the sending of false information regarding the potential application of the bomber homing device H2S by Coastal Command for tracking U-Boats. Then his name crops up once more as having been involved in the deception scheme devised by Jones for ensuring that the V1s fired at central London, most of which were falling short, continued to do so (though tragically a number of them still fell on London — the southern suburbs inevitably bearing the brunt). In this deception, because of the MI5-controlled agents' established 'reliability' in the Germans' eyes, the agents' distorted reports which showed a tendency for the flying bombs to overshoot were accepted by the V1 organisation in France as outweighing the evidence of sample flying bombs fitted with radio transmitters which correctly indicated the shortfall. (Incidentally, Montagu covers the V1 deception in some detail in *Beyond Top Secret U* without mentioning Cholmondeley: 'B1A case workers worked wonders'.)

In *Most Secret War* Jones describes how, having left Whitehall after the war, he came to learn about 'Mincemeat' in 1952 after being asked by Churchill to return for a year to the Ministry of Defence. As a member now of the Joint Intelligence Committee, at the first meeting he happened to attend there was discussion about what should be done regarding the question of Ian Colvin's book which had been submitted for security clearance. It was at this time that Chomondeley told him about Duff Cooper's riposte that he had the story from Churchill himself, without any caution that security still applied. Interestingly, Jones refers to George as 'the key man' in the deception.

Montagu in his book *The Man who Never Was* praises Chomondeley for his subtlety and ingenuity and acknowledges him as the source of the eventual idea as it came to the author of floating a corpse ashore; and in the brief chapter on 'Mincemeat' in *Beyond Top Secret U* he extolls the way in which they worked very happily and well together, with each carrying out the parts of the job which he could do best. Yet, as we only have a one-sided account, it is difficult to judge the relative credit to be assigned to Montagu and Cholmondeley for the success of the operation. It has ever been the lot of the intelligence services officer that no public credit is possible, but on no particular evidence I certainly get the feeling that Cholmondeley is due more than he has received — a feeling reinforced by the hostility of his family when I eventually contacted them.

Jewell was the only career serviceman. He first appears as a Midshipman in January 1933, rising to Lieutenant in February 1937, and taking command of *P219*/later *Seraph* in December 1942. He is shown with the MBE in August 1943, and the DSC in June 1944. He left *Seraph* in February 1944 and rose to Lieutenant-Commander (August 1944), Commander (December 1948), Captain (June 1953), Assistant Chief of Staff at Norwood NATO Eastern Atlantic Command (June 1957), Director of the Royal Naval Staff College (March 1959), and ended up as a member of the Joint Global War Study Group with the Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff, in August 1961. His name disappears in 1963 when he presumably retired. Of his junior officers who helped him commit Major Martin to the deep, William D. S. Scott had a similarly distinguished and long career, rising to Deputy Director of Naval Plans, Central Defence Staff, to Rear Admiral and Chief of the Polaris Executive in 1976-79. J. A. Davis, DSC, retired as Lieutenant-Commander in 1957, and R. J. Sutton, *Seraph*'s engineer, as Commander (E) in 1961.

Seraph's log (ADM 173/18038), Operational History (ADM 199/1920) and Jewell's patrol reports (ADM 199/1841) survive in the PRO. *Seraph* had been built by Vickers Armstrongs at Barrow in October 1941 as a Type 3 S-Class, part of an order for 62 short-range standard class submarines which suffered 20 losses. Jewell's first patrol in July 1942 produced a useful lesson for himself and the Flag Officer Submarines; he picked up unidentified mechanistic noises and loosed off two torpedoes at a school of

Roger's moment of triumph came when we visited the mortuary in August 1986. The present Superintendent, Nick Finch, put us in touch with Henry Marshall who had taken over from George Grayling after the war. Becoming good friends, George told him, in strict confidence around 1948-49, what had happened. He said that in spite of his position, Bentley Purchase (later Sir) used to run about in an old 15cwt van he used on his farm and this was the vehicle he had used to bring in the body. The staff in the adjoining Coroner's office were told under no circumstances were they to approach the mortuary on the day in question.

whales! This generated much Admiralty soul-searching on the adequacy of submarine captain training. It evidently did not prejudice his career, as his subsequent two tours of duty in the Mediterranean (August 1942-January 1943 and April-December 1943; 14 patrols and special missions, 3 torpedo kills, 4 depth chargings) included two other highly secret special operations in addition to 'Mincemeat'. These were the embarkation of General Giraud and staff from Vichy France on November 6, 1942 and the delivery and recovery of General Mark Clark from an Algerian beach on October 21-25, 1942. For the latter HMS *Seraph* became USS *Seraph* under the command of American Captain Jerauld Wright (who had accompanied Mark Clark on the Giraud operation), with the crew simulating American accents ('Seraphese') and Jewell hovering tactfully in the background. It is difficult to know whether Jewell was singled out as being particularly adept at this close inshore work, or if it was just the luck of the draw — I suspect it was the former.

Ships' logs are primarily navigational records, and so enable an accurate plot of *Seraph*'s track in the final stages of 'Mincemeat' to be prepared. The *Seraph*'s log is therefore a useful amplification to the letter describing the launching of the body, reproduced in *The Man Who Never Was*, which Jewell sent to Montagu, with a copy to Flag Officer Submarines, after a signal had been sent reporting completion of the operation. (Jewell's description of the state of decomposition of the corpse is in fact deleted by Montagu in the book, presumably out of

In the film Sir Bernard's own mortuary at University College was used. Here Robert Fleming (left) playing Charles Cholmondeley but disguised in the film as George Acres dresses the body with the screen Montagu. Two factual mistakes: the late-pattern Mae West and shoes instead of boots with the Army battledress.

Left: **The real mortuary — a photo taken from the War Office file. Roger believes the attendant is Fred Shrieve, Purchase's head officer. The body on a metal mortuary stretcher is propped against a mortuary trolley. Montagu describes in his book the difficulty they had getting the boots on the frozen body which they solved by thawing out the ankles and feet with an electric fire. Henry Marshall confirmed that the fire they used was taken from the lodge.** *Right:* **We took our matching shot with the kind permission of the London Borough of Hackney. The floor slabs and wainscoting duplicated exactly those in the original except that the floor has since had a cable conduit run across it. The original wartime refrigerators (out of the picture to the right) have since been replaced although the trolley is probably original.**

courtesy to the relatives; it was worse than anticipated, with green mould across the lower part of the face.) From the *Seraph*'s log one can see, for example, that the groups of fishing boats through which Jewell manoeuvred were much more widely dispersed than I had imagined. His landfall is difficult to determine from the modern chart and Admiralty Pilot, as the reference point on which he took his final bearing, Portil Pillar, has disappeared. I managed to locate it from the contemporary Pilot in the Naval Historical Library as being a shore marker on the boundary between two districts. This was in fact marked on the modern Spanish large-scale maps. I was amazed he had come in so close. *Seraph*'s draft trimmed down to the casing deck was 6.4 metres, the modern Spanish 1:50,000 map shows a depth of about 4.5 metres (presumably at mean low water): at his position he must virtually have been aground!

The map (page 18) also serves to show the general topography of Huelva, being situated on the nose of a ridge surrounded by marsh and protected from the sea by a long sand spit, Punta Umbria, along which the tide race sets, and which required a shoreward breeze to ensure Major Martin would ground. In fact he was noticed by a fishing boat, picked up from the water by a launch, landed on the beach, handed over to a detachment of infantry exercising there and eventually taken round to Huelva itself.

For *Seraph* there was surely a certain aptness about her going on in July 1943 to act as a beacon for the American landings on Cent Beach, to the west of the British, in the invasion of Sicily. She was eventually scrapped in December 1965 by Wards of Briton Ferry.

In the midst of my research, the *Official History of Intelligence* began to be published, the most notable thing about it being the almost complete lack of names. Whilst it does not cover offensive intelligence and deception — the subject of the recently completed Official History by Michael Howard, Regius Professor of History at Oxford, the publication of which is indefinitely postponed — it does however contain a brief mention of 'Mincemeat' and the details of the confirmation of its effectiveness obtained through Ultra, which are omitted even from Montagu's *Beyond Top Secret U*.

I also attempted to gain access to the official archive 'Mincemeat' file. My first problem was who to ask! I rather baulked at writing to MI5 registry, address unknown, and in the end sought the advice of Michael Howard. He rather surprisingly suggested that the Cabinet Office Historical Section might prove fruitful — it had never struck me that the final resting place of the Twenty Committee and LCS records would be there. Not surprisingly I had a very courteous and unproductive correspondence with them, they remaining unconvinced that the blanket secrecy restrictions might be relaxed in this one very special case. This despite Colvin having been shown the files (or something very like them) in the 1950s, and the almost complete (if one includes *Beyond Top Secret U*), though not entirely to be relied upon, officially sanctioned revelations by Montagu. I considered and rejected appealing directly to Mrs Thatcher!

Then I found, in the PRO War Office records, a file dated 1943 of copies of documents released to the public (WO106/5921). This contained most of Montagu's illustrations and facsimiles, and must actually have been released in the 'fifties. Soon afterwards *ATB* obtained a reference to another War Office file (WO208/3163), a post-war assessment from captured records of the effectiveness of the operation (unfortunately lacking the original enclosures). I suspect these two files may be the ones that were shown to Colvin.

Normally the main mortuary refrigerator maintains a temperature of +4°C (36°F) which merely delays decomposition and after three or four days the eyes dry out and fall in — as would appear to have happened to 'Major Martin' in this close up. Henry Marshall doubted that the body would have been frozen solid as this would have fractured the fragile tissues as the body fluids turned to ice and expanded — a sure giveaway sign that it had been kept in cold storage if the Spanish carried out a detailed autopsy. However to preserve the body for the length of time necessary for Operation 'Mincemeat', it must have been frozen as confirmed by the boots episode. Sir Bernard's characteristically confident advice to Montagu was that 'You have nothing to fear from a Spanish post mortem; to detect that this young man had not died after an aircraft had been lost at sea would need a pathologist of my experience — and there aren't any in Spain'!

The Books

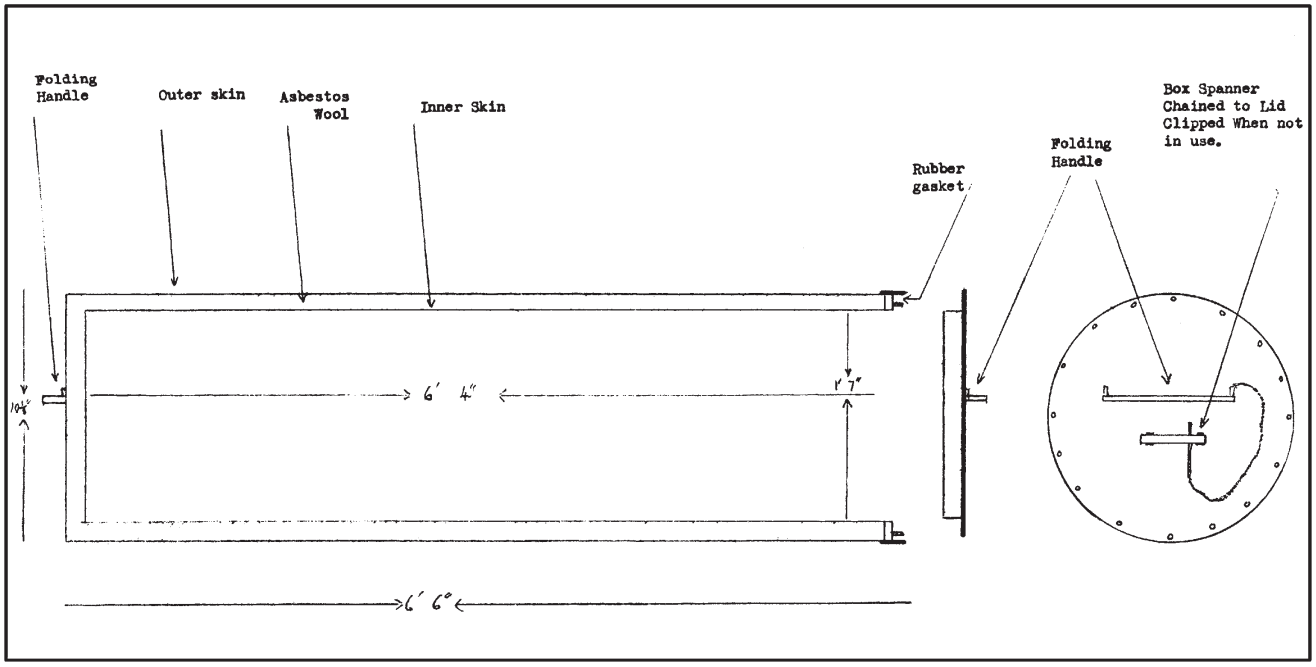
I then set about a minute examination of Montagu's books to collect as many clues as I could.

Firstly, what might be termed 'Those in the Know'. These evidently included Montagu, probably Cholmondeley, and possibly one or all of the rest of Section 17M — Dr Joan Saunders; Marjorie Boxall; Pauline Fenley; Pat Trehearne; Robin Bartlett; Norman Clackson; Ken McKay; Richard Perkins; Sally Sullivan; Esme Sherriff; Patricia Hall; Juliet Ponsonby; Vera Sylvester and Miss McCarthy. Could one of these have been 'one of the girls working in our various offices' who was responsible for getting someone to write the love letters from Major Martin's fiancée, 'Pam'? And who might be the young lady who worked 'in the War Office' whose photograph was chosen as 'Pam' out of the snapshots which were asked for from the various young ladies whose attractive looks put them in the category for selection? 'Pam' was still alive when I interviewed Montagu. None of 17M are listed as having attended Montagu's memorial service.

Then there were the minor participants, who might not know the name but could know sufficient information to enable an identification — Horsfall, the MI5 driver of the van which transported the corpse to the *Seraph*'s depot ship in Scotland; N. L. A. Jewell, who commanded *Seraph*; the man who was photographed for Major Martin's ID Card; Spilsbury the pathologist and Bentley Purchase the coroner, who between them provided the body; William Hynde Norrie Martin, to whom the death announcement was thought by his friends to refer; Duff Cooper, who blew the whole operation; and, from their own books, Charles Fraser-Smith, who provided the canister, and Ian Colvin, who ferreted out the grave and ended his story with an intention to identify the corpse.

Secondly, the body. It was that of a man in his early 'thirties, who had not been in good health, a bit of a ne'er-do-well, who had died alone of bronchial pneumonia in November 1942.

Thirdly, it seemed to me that there was just enough information to identify the mortuary used, and hence the relevant records, from *The Man Who Never Was*. Montagu mentions in a light-hearted vein how after he and Cholmondeley, with Jock Horsfall at the wheel, had collected the corpse



A special asbestos-lined container had been constructed to transport the body in what was hoped would be an insulated environment to shield it from further deterioration. Both inner and outer skins were of 22 gauge welded steel sheeting having a total weight of just over one hundredweight. The addition of the asbestos wool increased the weight to 2cwt 12lbs and the total 'operational' weight was estimated at 400lbs. On the evening of Saturday, April 17, 1943, Major Martin, wrapped in a blanket, was carefully lowered into the container which had been filled with dry ice. Packed around with more dry ice, the lid was bolted down and loaded into the back of a Fordson 2-ton van. The cylinder was labelled 'Optical Instruments. For F.O.S. Shipment' to disguise its contents from the crew of the submarine which would take it to Spain. (F.O.S. is the abbreviation for Flag Officer Submarines.)

from cold storage for he and Horsfall to take it by van to Scotland, the journey had nearly come to an end before it started. As Montagu describes what happened, they were driving out from the mortuary when they caught sight of a cinema queue ('opposite' according to the *Sunday Express* version) waiting to go in for a spy film, and the same thought flashed across their minds: 'What would those people think if we were to stop and say to them, "Don't bother about the film. We can tell you a much better story — and ours is true. Just look inside this canister"? And we all burst out laughing to such an extent that Jock almost rammed a tram-standard?' Here then was a mortuary on a tram route near a cinema — not difficult to locate one would have thought.

Lastly, there was the grave itself. Surely the surviving relatives would have added an inscription — giving a clue to the identity?

The Film

A similar scan for clues was necessary with the film, which I had unfortunately never seen, and which Montagu praises for being based on a brilliant script and for its thrilling dramatic invention. The National Film Archive had a single copy, but insisted that a safety copy should be made for showing — much too expensive. The BBC turned out to have a copy, and (as mentioned earlier) the television rights, but were not co-operative about showing it to me. However, the NFA Library had a copy of the sub-titles script, which for my purposes was actually more use than viewing the film; and their stills collection had an extremely informative set of photographs on and off set.

So far as the mortuary was concerned, the one used in the film was Spilsbury's at University College, which did not fit the clues available.

Two particular lines in the sub-titles to Nigel Balchin's script which naturally aroused my curiosity occur in the scene where Montagu askes the dead man's father for permission to use the body, with the words 'he would be doing a great service to England'. To which the father replies 'My son, Sir, was a Scotsman'. I can see no dramatic purpose to such an aside, except that referring to Britain as England is a common American misnomer (as it is in so many countries — not least in England itself!) and the film was due for release in America; it could have been prompted by the inscription on the grave, or by the fact that William Norrie Martin *was* Scottish; but maybe it was what actually happened, and Balchin got it from Montagu? This added Balchin to my list of Those in the Know!

The scene in which Montagu appears as an Air Vice-Marshal at a meeting of the Chiefs of Staff, opposing his screen-self as portrayed by Clifton Webb, clearly served a purpose in depicting discussion of controversial aspects of the plan, though, as we have seen, it would appear from examination of the available records that Montagu was not present at the COS meetings of April 1943. In the dramatisation of the story the screen character of Cholmondeley is converted into that of a young naval officer, Montagu's junior, working for him and taking orders from him (Cholmondeley was 25 years of age to Montagu's 41), and the plot has Cholmondeley locating the body and Montagu arranging (with Charles Fraser-Smith) for the canister: the exact reverse of Montagu's account. 'Pam', whose photograph was used in Operation 'Mincemeat' for Major Martin's fiancée, is shown as Montagu's secretary and as having recruited the young lady — Lucy in the film — who wrote the fiancée's love letters.

As the gates of the mortuary yard swung open, the Fordson, with St John 'Jock' Horsfall at the wheel and Cholmondeley and Montagu beside him, would have turned left through the churchyard to reach Mare Street.

After emerging and turning towards the West End, Montagu writes that they spotted a queue outside a cinema showing a spy film. The irony of the situation was not lost on these real life intelligence agents and they all burst out laughing.

Researching the clues

Having gathered all the clues I could, I set about following them up. Purchase and Spilsbury were both long dead; Spilsbury after a lifetime of post-mortems on suicides of every possible type chose to gas himself in his lab at University College. There were, however, biographies on both, with details of their children. What else emerged from the biographies was that Spilsbury kept a definitive card index of every case he had ever dealt with (in preparation for a never written textbook on forensic medicine). As it seemed highly likely that he had either obtained the body or examined it, it was virtually certain that there was a card for the corpse. I have failed to locate this card index and one must presume that it has been destroyed. In addition the name of Purchase's most trusted officer is given as Fred Shrieve, an encouragingly unusual name, and as it is presumably he who features in the mortuary photograph in Montagu's book, *The Man Who Never Was*, he was added to my list of Those in the Know.

I next investigated the handling of bodies in general in order to find out what records were generated.

On someone's death the attendant doctor gives a certificate of the cause of death, which chronicles the progress of the disease, to the relatives. This they take to the registrar, who registers the death and issues a death certificate incorporating the details of the cause of death. He also gives them a certificate of disposal authorising burial or cremation (an independent referee must also certify cause of death for cremation). This the relatives give to the undertaker, who hands it to the burial or cremation authority. They tear off a slip which they return to the registrar to certify that the body has been properly disposed of. The registrar will check up on any non-returned slips after a short while, and thus ensure that all bodies are expeditiously dealt with.

Two other fates could await a corpse however. Due to an express wish, or if there are no relatives, it may be passed to a teaching hospital for anatomical dissection by students, or it may be exported for burial.

The Anatomy Act and its successor's regularised the excesses of the eighteenth century body-snatchers by allowing the use of corpses for instruction purposes under the control of an inspector of anatomy, who licensed and inspected the schools, and took over responsibility for the corpses used. The inspector of anatomy ensures that the remains are finally disposed of within two years, and returns a notification of disposal to the registrar. There has been a very recent Anatomy Act, reorganising the inspectorate, but the above summarises the position in 1942.

The case of export is especially relevant, for as we shall see, Montagu claimed that the registration formalities were accomplished perfectly legally, and exporting the body was of course exactly what they were doing, albeit in an unorthodox manner. At the time the Removal of Bodies from England Regulations, 1927 (SR&O 557) applied. The coroner had to be notified, enclosing the death certificate. The coroner returned the death certificate to the registrar, informing him that an intention to export existed, and then had four days in which to decide to hold an inquest. The documentation is not clear, but presumably the registrar would cease to expect a disposal certificate. Unfortunately all disposal records are held for only five years.

A cause of death certificate can be issued only by the doctor who attended the patient in his last illness. If he did not see the patient after death or within two weeks of death, or if the cause of death appears to be non-medical or indeterminate, the case is also referred to the coroner. Purchase introduced the now generally obeyed practice that this was done with anyone dying within twenty-four hours of admission to hospital. The coroner then establishes the cause of death.

The office of coroner is a very ancient one, and coroners enjoy a quasi-judical status of great independence. Their proceedings have all the power of a normal court, with juries and cross-examination of witnesses; they even have the power of subpoena. They are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor, but are actually paid by the County Council, who also provide the court buildings. Their staff are regular policemen, paid by the Home Office, whilst their mortuary and post-mortem buildings are provided by the Local Authority, who also employ a mortuary keeper. The whole system is thus administratively extremely complex.

A coroner can order a post-mortem on the body, and for this purpose employs, as an independent consultant, any forensic pathologist from a list approved by the Home Office. Thus during the war Purchase

Before they set off on the long overnight drive to the submarine base at Holy Loch on the west coast of Scotland, they drove to Charles Cholmondeley's mews flat for something to eat and prepare sandwiches and thermos flasks for the journey. While they were inside they took turns to keep an eye on the van parked outside. Today Queen's Gate Place Mews (off Cromwell Road) is a mecca of vintage car restoration. A Land-Rover is parked outside Cholmondeley's old flat, No. 18.

Aware of the momentous part that they were playing in history, at the very centre of an operation which, if successful, would save the lives of hundreds of men due to land in Sicily, Flight Lieutenant Cholmondeley took this picture of Lieutenant-Commander Montagu and 'Jock' during the journey to Scotland. As they would not have left London until after dark, and Montagu records that they reached Greenock early the next morning, the picture must have been taken near the end of the journey, somewhere on the road in Scotland, most possibly in Renfrewshire. The Fordson BBE appears to have been pulled up in a layby on the right of the road — possibly for what our American friends would call a 'comfort stop'. The number plate EPB 657 was issued by the Surrey Licencing Authority in mid-1936 (probably June) which ties in with the Fordson's era of 1934-38. The BBE forward control chassis was fitted with a 30hp V8 engine — in this case having the addition of a proprietary van bodywork.

generally employed Spilsbury, whose health was deteriorating and who needed local employment.

If the coroner considers that the cause of death is established and non-criminal, he can dispense with a public enquiry; otherwise an inquest — a full judical trial of the evidence — is held. Before the murder of Lord Lucan's nanny in 1974 a coroner's jury could find a named individual guilty of a criminal offence in relation to a death — that case, where the jury returned a verdict of murder against Lord Lucan, led to a revision of the law, and now only a finding of 'Unlawful Killing' is allowed.

The death is usually registered immediately, and the coroner subsequently supplies the verdict of the jury as the cause of death, the certificate being suitably annotated. The coroner issues a certificate of release of the body to the relatives, which, like the certificate of disposal, has a tear-off strip which is returned to the registrar by the burial authority.

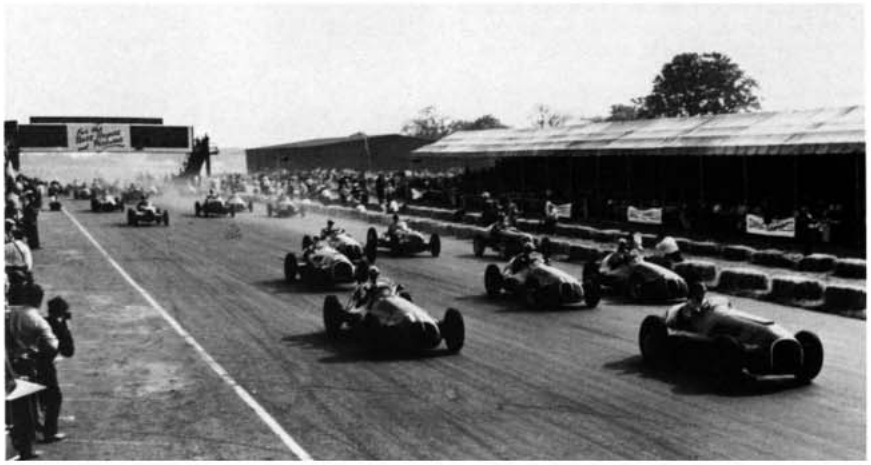
It can thus be seen that there ought to be lots of records around; and coroners, at least, keep a file on each case. In addition a coroner's register is maintained which gives basic details of every corpse passing through his hands. After twenty years or so the coroner's files are weeded of the majority of routine cases and in London passed to the Greater London Records Office, where 10 per cent are preserved. In common with all public records which relate to named individuals they are closed for one hundred years.

The above details summarise the peacetime position, of course. The expectation of the authorities in the late 'thirties was that Hitler would deal a devastating knockout blow from the air onto centres of population on declaration of war, resulting in massive destruction and loss of life. They therefore had ready to be authorised by the Emergency Powers Act (which was passed through all its stages in four hours on the outbreak of war) a series of Defence Regulations, which provided for a streamlining of the procedure for dealing with violent death and the total disappearance of casualties. These were subsequently consolidated into the Defence (Burial, Inquests and Registration of Deaths) Regulations, July 1942. Perhaps apocryphally, there were said to be several million cardboard coffins stockpiled.

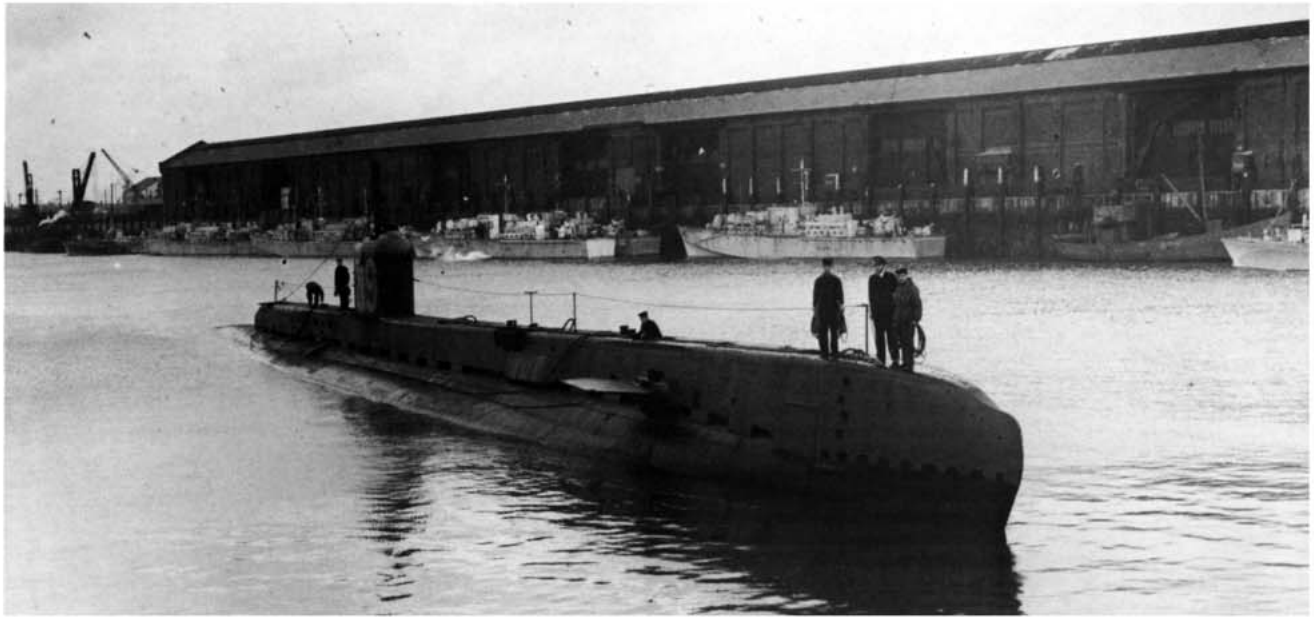
Causes of death were expanded to include war operations and a separate card-index was maintained at the Registrar General's office (82,460 entries), which forms the basis of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Register of Civilian War Dead. Disposal certificates for deaths due to war operations were unnecessary, certification by the ARP services Central Casualty Registry being sufficient, and such deaths were not referred to the coroner. The case of total destruction, unrecoverability or unidentifiability of a body *was* referred to the coroner, who, 'unless he thinks no useful purpose would be served', displayed a notice at the site requesting witnesses to attend an inquiry (with the same powers as an inquest). If no notice was displayed, the coroner, 'at such time and place as he thinks fit', held an enquiry, without a jury. He then certified the cause of death to the registrar as though he had held an inquest. (Members of the American Forces were totally exempt from all provisions.) Thus Purchase had absolute discretion and could have concealed a death totally, or certified that the body had been completely destroyed. However, November 1942 — the month from which the body was kept in cold storage, according to Montagu in *Beyond Top Secret U* — was a slack time for London air-raids, (only 552 deaths over the whole country) and the Register of Civilian War Dead, a copy of which is held by the Guildhall Library, contains no suitable candidates.

What, then, of the records maintained by coroners? The attribution by Nigel West in *MI5* of Westminster as the mortuary used did not seem to fit what apparent clues there were to go on, and in any case Westminster was at that time temporarily part of Purchase's area, and so I requested and was granted permission to search Purchase's register. I was looking for a man in his early thirties who had died from pneumonia in November 1942 (the 'late autumn' being the phrase Montagu used in *The Man Who Never Was*). There was no good candidate, but there was a Reginald Harrison who died at the age of 33 on Sunday, November 29, 1942 (twenty-one days after 'Torch'), in Archway Hospital from *tuberculous* bronco pneumonia. There were no candidates at all in the Westminster Register (which as it happened *ATB* had independently searched).

Reginald Harrison's death certificate has some very peculiar features. A dash is inserted for his occupation. This is not normal modern practice, but presumably means unknown. I investigated his place of residence, and it turned out to be Parker Street House, a huge Victorian municipal lodging house built by Holborn Council (now subsumed into the London Borough of Camden). Its present occupants seem to consist of transient homeless single men; however, in the extremely fluid situation of wartime manpower manipulation I suppose this may not have been valid then; it is evident that there must have been relatively few men in their early 'thirties not in the forces — the only exceptions being those in



'Jock' Horsfall was a notable pre-war racing driver who returned to the sport after the war. Possibly his most famous victory was the Spa 24-Hours in 1948 on the Aston Martin works team. After his death at Silverstone in the Daily Express British Racing Driver's Club International Trophy Race for Grand Prix cars *(above)* in August 1949, the Aston Martin Owners Club instituted a Commemorative Race for the Horsfall Trophy competed for at the annual St John Horsfall Trophy Meeting. (Associated Press)



The submarine chosen for the operation by Rear-Admiral C. B. Barry, the Flag Officer commanding submarines, was the *Seraph* with Norman Jewell as Lieutenant-in-Command, already very experienced in undercover operations in the Mediterranean. They had taken General Mark Clark on his clandestine mission to Algeria in October 1942 and the following month had picked up General Henri Giraud secretly from France. The container was stowed on a torpedo rack. (IWM)

reserved occupations, or medically unfit (physically or mentally) or in prison.

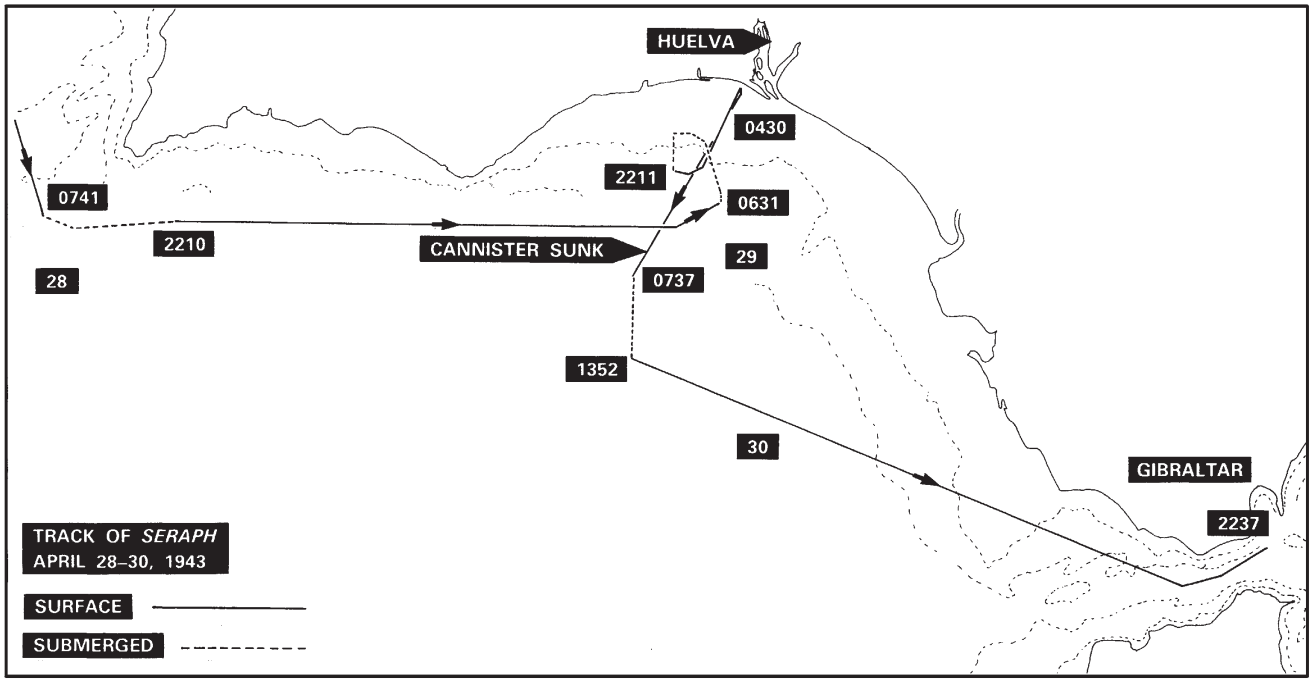
The certification of death is by J. W. Hulme, Deputy Coroner. It appears from magnificent detective work by the Greater London Record Office that he was *not* Purchase's but H. Neville Stafford's Deputy, in the Western Area based on the Fulham Road court. He was quite old, and I have not managed to find any descendants.

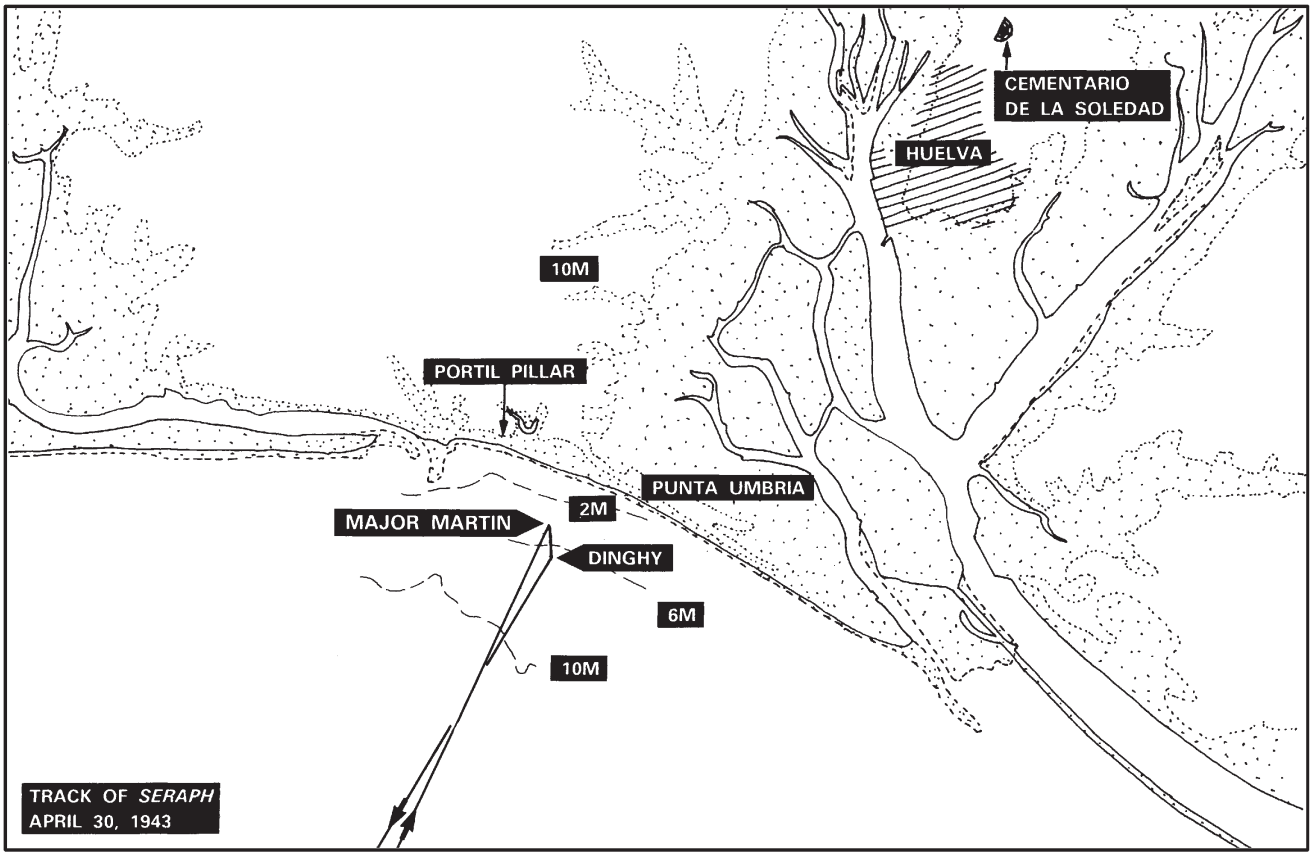
The cause of death is given as tuberculous bronco pneumonia and Amylord disease, after post-mortem. Tuberculous, or tubercular, broncho pneumonia fills the lungs with a cheesy substance, rather than fluid, and Amylordosis is the deposition of a complex fatty/waxy protein. Normal modern practice is to avoid post-mortems on tuberculosis victims.

The informant is D. W. Murphy, sister, St Ebbas Hospital, Epsom. This is unfortunately completely ambiguous, neither possible interpretation yielding a sensible scenario. If D. W. Murphy is his natal sister how can she register his death from hospital; alternatively if she is a nursing sister at St Ebbas, what is she doing registering a death at Archway Hospital on the other side of London? St Ebbas turned out to be one of the ring of Edwardian London County Council mental hospitals encircling London, a sort of dispersed 'garden' hospital for epileptics and those who were considered temporarily insane and likely to recover — it is now principally for the mentally handicapped. This seemed extremely encouraging! Archway Hospital turned out to have been the Holborn Infirmary. I tentatively constructed a scenario, in modern parlance, of Harrison the loner and schizophrenic dropout.

All my attempts to clarify the status of D. W. Murphy were for a long time frustrated. The only nurse of this name on the 1942 Register of the General Nursing Council was a *mental* nurse Daniel William Murphy of St Leonards — this was at least within 50 miles of Epsom, but could 'sister' have been applied to a man? Only one female of this name had died in the intervening years, a Mrs Dorothy Winifred Murphy, auxiliary nurse. This also seemed extremely encouraging, as it would explain why she did not feature on the Nurse's Register, until I discovered she had married in 1949, her maiden name was not Harrison, and she would have been 12 at the time. Finally, I obtained confirmation from the registrar that the informant was Reginald Harrison's natal sister, Mrs Dorothy Winifred Murphy. Unfortunately it was not possible to tie together two suitable Harrison births, or find a likely Murphy/Harrison marriage in the English or Scottish indices. It may be that Mrs Murphy is still alive.

Eventually, I located the burial record of Harrison in a common grave in Islington



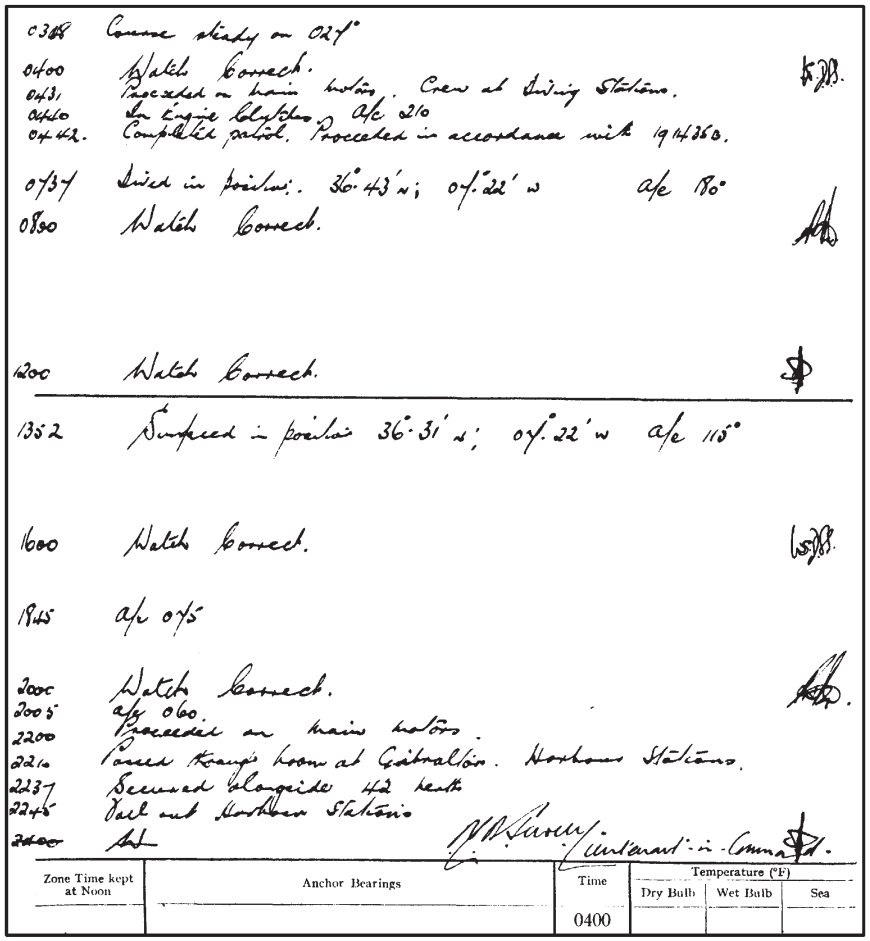


Cemetery. This is, I admit, substantial evidence against his candidacy, but I don't think we can entirely rule out the notion of a weighted coffin, especially if he had relatives who would expect a funeral. I daresay it is not actually illegal to bury an empty coffin, but the complications with undertakers would surely be substantial.

Next I decided to investigate the grave in Spain, as well as I could at this distance. Colvin's book made clear which cemetery was involved, and I wrote a simple letter to the cemetery at Huelva asking for details of what exactly was written on the slab, and who maintained it, which I got a colleague to translate into Spanish. I was gratified to receive a reply from the cemetery keeper, who reiterated the inscription given by Montagu (i.e. the relatives had neither added nor substituted anything since), and added that a lot of British tourists sought the grave out. As regards maintenance, he said I was the first person ever to ask about this, and that the grave was not maintained by anyone and was actually in a very bad state, overgrown and askew.

This I thought rather a disgrace, considering the albeit unwitting service the corpse had rendered, and was moved to write to the Director of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission suggesting that it be made an official war grave, enclosing the cemetery keeper's letter. I received a very prompt reply assuring me that it had already been made an official war grave in 1977, after being the responsibility of the Property Services Agency (in succession to the Ministry of Works); that the maintenance (by a fine irony) was delegated to the German Consulate; and that a recent inspection had shown the grave to now be in good condition. I was impressed by this courteous and efficient reply, but wondered what had happened in 1977!

Then, out of the blue, I was contacted by Jesus Ramirez Copeiro del Villar, a mining engineer working in Huelva, who had been given my address by the cemetery keeper and was a 'Mincemeat' enthusiast! He very


0388 Course steady on 027°
0400 Watch Correct.
0431 Proceeded on main motors. Crew at diving Stations.
0440 In single column. A/C 210
0442 Completed patrol. Proceeded in accordance with 191435B.
0737 Dived in position: 36°43'N; 07°22'W A/C 180°
0830 Watch Correct.
1200 Watch Correct.
1352 Surfaced in position 36°31'N; 07°22'W A/C 115°
1600 Watch Correct.
1845 A/C 075
2000 Watch Correct.
2005 A/C 060.
2200 Proceeded on main motors.
2210 Passed Europa Point at Gibraltar. Northern Stations.
2237 Secured alongside 42 berth
2248 Part out Northern Stations
2400
J. W. Linsey Lieutenant-in-Command.

Zone Time kept at Noon	Anchor Bearings	Time	Temperature (°F) Dry Bulb	Wet Bulb	Sea
		0400			

The traces on the maps were prepared by Roger Morgan using details given in the *Seraph*'s log. The page for April 30 makes no mention of the operation other than a cryptic '191435B', or the launching of the corpse which took place while the crew were all below deck. (ADM173/18038)

kindly went through the Huelva newspaper, *Odiel*, for the whole of 1943 and found absolutely no mention of it — including specifically no photograph of the body on the deck of the fishing boat as illustrated in Piekalkiewicz's book. He also sent me some snapshots of the grave, showing that the top left-hand corner had been broken off. This he claimed had been done when the Germans had opened the grave to check that there was a body there(?). As both Montagu's photograph and a publicity photograph for the film show the slab intact I think we can discount this — but could it indicate a subsequent exhumation and re-burial in Britain by the relatives?

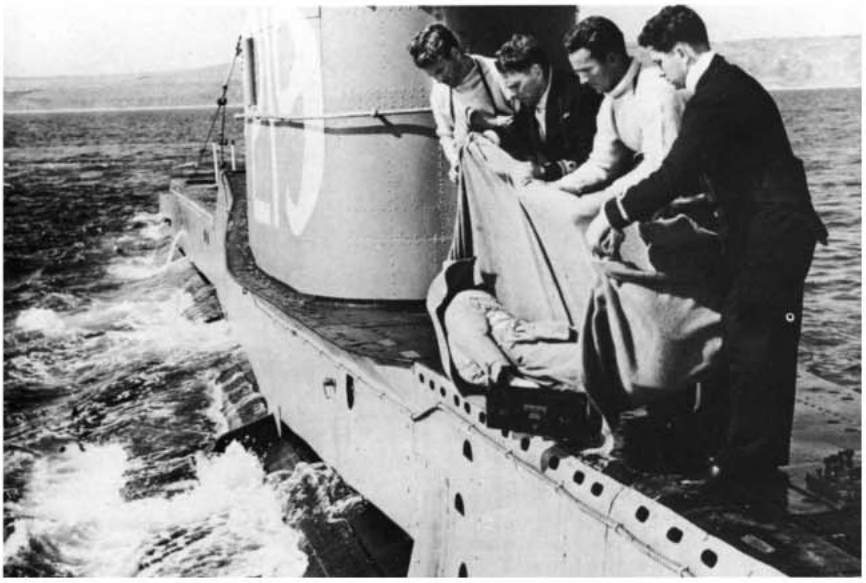
Finally, I set about tracing Those in the Know, or their descendants. Unless the person to be traced belongs to some sort of trade or professional organisation basically this amounts to the extremely tedious process of scanning the St Catherine's House birth, marriage and death indices, and the Somerset House wills, in an attempt to construct a subsequent family tree of the person and to determine the rough area of the country involved. Armed with this information you can search the telephone directories for the whole country, spiralling outwards from your most likely area. With a bit of luck you might finally contact the person, or at least someone who knows him, by phoning all your likely contacts (as a necessary adjunct to this procedure I spent some time constructing a map showing all the telephone directory areas in Britain; such a map is not released by British Telecom). If you are unlucky you might be reduced to trawling through the electoral role for the likely area!

It was relatively easy to contact Purchase's son, as he was a headmaster, but after a difficult search I established that there were no direct descendants of Spilsbury alive, his only surviving relative having drowned off Eastbourne in 1984 before I managed to locate him.

More disappointingly, Charles Cholmondeley had also died after I had started my search, but his widow was easily locatable. Intriguingly, I was unable to find either his birth or death certificate, even though I knew his exact date and place of death! For some time I indulged in the paranoid fantasy that the death registrations of ex-intelligence service personnel were somehow intercepted and suppressed, but subsequent correspondence established that an error in transmission had occurred somewhere between the local and national registrars, and his death is now inserted as a manuscript footnote to the main index. I suspect that he was born abroad. Cholmondeley's sister had such distinctive initials that it was just a matter of a telephone search, as it was for Jewell.

'Jock' Horsfall caused me some trouble until I realised that his christian name had been StJohn! I located his surviving brother and found that he had returned to his pre-war occupation of motor racing, and had been killed in the Daily Express British Racing Driver's Club International Trophy Race for Grand Prix Formula Cars at Silverstone in August 1949, having come sixth in one heat. He had stood in as driver of an ERA in place of a driver who had been killed in the British Grand Prix at the same spot.

Shrieve, despite having such an unusual name, had apparently been near retirement in the 1940s, and the trail went cold. Lady Diana Cooper was of course easy, and she sent one of her famous postcards covered in minute pencil scribbling. Mrs Colvin was easily traceable through Ian Colvin's publishers. Charles Fraser-Smith could be located from the publisher's blurb on the dust jacket of his book. Amazingly, William Hynde Norrie Martin turned out to be a good friend of a fellow student in my bookbinding evening class, who put me in



The film recreation using another S-class submarine, HMS *Scythian*. After the canister was brought up on deck through the torpedo loading hatch (never normally opened at sea) by three crewman, they were then sent below. Lieutenant David Scott was in charge of the bridge, with Lieutenant Ralph Norris acting as look-out, while Lieutenant Jewell, Lieutenant Dickie Sutton and Lieutenant John Davis prepared to launch the body from the fore-casing. Lieutenant Jewell's Most Secret report dated April 30, 1943, despatched to Lieutenant-Commander, The Hon. E. E. S. Montagu from Gibraltar reads as follows:

Weather: **The wind was variable altering between SW and SE force 2. It was expected that the sea breeze would spring up in the morning, close inshore, as it had on the previous morning in similar conditions. Sea and swell — 2.0. [wave height] — Sky overcast with very low clouds — visibility was patchy, 1 to 2 miles — Barometer 1016.**

Fishing boats: **A large number of small fishing boats were working in the bay. The closest was left, about a mile off, and it is not thought that the submarine was observed by them.**

Operation: **The time of 0430 was chosen as being the nearest to Low Water Lisbon, (0731) which would allow the submarine to be well clear by dawn. The Cannister was opened at 0415 and the body extracted. The blanket was opened up and the body examined. The brief case was found to be securely attached. The face was heavily tanned and the whole of the lower half from the eyes down covered with mould. The skin had started to break away on the nose and cheek bones. The body was very high. The Mae West was blown up very hard and no further air was needed. The body was placed in the water at 0430 in a position 148° Portil Pillar 1.3 miles approximately eight cables from the beach and started to drift inshore. This was aided by the wash of the screws going full speed astern. The rubber dinghy was placed in the water blown up and upside down about half a mile further south of this position. The submarine then withdrew to seaward and the cannister, filled with water, and containing the blanket, tapes and also the rubber dinghy's container was pushed over the side in position 36°37′30 North 07°18′00 West in 310 fathoms of water by sounding machine. The container would not at first submerge but after being riddled by fire from Vickers gun and also a .455 revolver [by Lieutenant Scott] at very short range was seen to sink. Signal reporting operation complete was passed at 0715. A sample of the water close inshore is attached.**

On the bridge of the real *Seraph* returning to base. L-R: Lieutenant F. G. Harris (who joined the submarine later); Lieutenant-in-Command Norman Jewell; Warrant Engineer M. M. Stevenson, the Engineer Officer and the First Lieutenant, Lieutenant David Scott. (IWM)

32

MOST SECRET

N. A. MADRID (Personal) MOST SECRET

IMMEDIATE

From D.N.I. (Personal).

Your 021738. Some of papers Major Martin had in his possession are of great importance and secrecy. Make formal demand for all papers and notify me by personal signal immediately of addresses of any official letters recovered. Such letters should be returned addressed to Commodore Rushbrooke, Personal, by fastest safe route and should not repetition not be opened or tampered with in any way. If no official letters are recovered make searching but discreet enquiries at Huelva and Madrid to find whether they were washed ashore and if so what has happened to them.

041321.

For more than two days Intelligence in London had to sweat it out in the absence of any news from Spain that the body had come ashore. In fact it had been fished out of the water by a local fisherman later the same day and handed over to the British Consulate in Huelva — minus the briefcase. The Vice-Consul, Francis Haselden, made arrangements for a military funeral the following day (May 1) in the local cemetery, the ceremony at 12 noon being attended by representatives of the Spanish Armed Forces. Obviously completely unaware of the importance of Major Martin, Haseldon reported the event in a routine message to the British Naval Attaché in Madrid who relayed it to London on May 3. Naturally there was no mention of the loss of any official papers but a suitably-worded signal was sent in reply from Montagu the following day *(above)*.

touch with him in Virginia. I assumed contacting members of 17M would be pointless, as they would have been enjoined to a lifetime of silence.

So what did I learn? Cholmondeley's relations would not even contemplate a discussion. Jewell kindly elaborated some detailed submarine technical points. Perhaps significantly, two people independently said that the reason the family requested complete anonymity was that the person whose corpse was used had been insane at the time he died. This of course was along the lines of just the sort of characterisation employed by Duff Cooper in his novel *Operation Heartbreak* concerning Willie Maryngton, and so might be merely the perpetration of a common myth. It was the one positive lead (if such it was) that I obtained, though, and it did correlate with St Ebbas!

Norrie Martin explained he had no involvement other than that Major Martin's obituary appeared in *The Times* soon after the *Hermes*, which he was aboard, was sunk in April 1942, and it was assumed by his friends that he was referred to. Montagu explains that he selected the name because there was a block of Martins of about the right seniority in the Navy List. In fact there are nine Martins, mainly Lieutenants, and only one W. Martin — temporary Major William Hynde Norrie Martin; the Germans as well as his friends must have identified him! One wonders what would have happened if he had subsequently been captured. Unfortunately the myth of his having been The Man Who Never Was was resurrected in the mid 'seventies by a London newspaper, which had evidently obtained his birth certificate from the Edinburgh registry.

33

MOST SECRET

To:- N.A. Madrid (Personal) IMPORTANT

From:- D.N.I. (Personal MOST SECRET

My 041321. Secret papers probably in black brief-case. Earliest possible information required whether this came ashore. If so, it should be recovered at once. If not included with papers in your 021738, care should be taken that it does not get into undesirable hands if it comes ashore later.

071216.

London had then to make a pretence of acting as if the loss was a genuine one and attempt to retrieve what were to all intents and purposes vital documents which must not, at all costs, fall into enemy hands. Thus an escalating series of signals were despatched to support this concern.

The search for the mortuary

On the basis of Montagu's description of the van with the corpse aboard having almost rammed a tram standard as they caught sight of the cinema queue upon leaving the 'cold storage', I began my search for the mortuary by finding out about tram routes. The central area had been served by a London County Council system with the current picked up from conductors buried in the road in conduits. The outer areas had been served by private companies, with the current picked up from overhead conductors suspended from standards, a cheaper though environmentally ungainly system. The private companies were eventually bought out by the LCC, who thus operated a dual distribution system, with elaborate changeover points. By Montagu's account they nearly hit a tram *standard*, and my search was therefore limited to the overhead system, which was mainly south of the river. By the 'thirties and the war trolleybuses had superseded the trams on the overhead sections, and some conduit sections had been converted. All the routes were however well documented.

Cinemas and the films shown in them were much more difficult however. With the continuing decline in cinema-going since the 'sixties many cinemas had closed and been converted or demolished. With the help of The Cinema Theatre Association I eventually found an obscure yearbook, *The Kinema Directory*, whose 1942 edition listed all cinemas by area; unfortunately the addresses were usually extremely imprecise. I had assumed that there would be a 1940s equivalent to *City Limits*, and this turned out to be *What's On*, whose issue for the week ending Saturday, April 17, 1943 (the day on which the body started its journey from cold storage to the submarine) I perused. The layout was unlike its modern equivalents, with the films split into new releases and 'repeats', central area and provincial, and 'other films on general release at cinemas not mentioned here'. It took me some time plotting the cinemas mentioned to realise that in general it covered only the west side of London, from Clapham to Hampstead. Either this was because it was not yet well established and this was its distribution area, or there was another publication covering the east which I failed to find. I compiled a list of 59 films showing on the day of the journey north and scanned them for a likely title.

Underground Agent initially took my fancy, but *Spy in Black* could equally have fitted, especially as Montagu says a 'spy' film. He was however writing extremely hurriedly ten years after the event, and I don't think we can rely on the minutiae of his account. Noné of the cinemas specifically listed as showing either of these films were likely. There remained the large number of cinemas not listed individually, some of which were evidently showing them. The *Evening Standard* and the *Evening News* listed only major central cinemas, so that was not a way round the problem.

The location of mortuaries was an even worse problem, for they appeared to be completely undocumented. Originally every Borough Council would have had its own public mortuary, but the coroner's areas had long since undergone changes with the amalgamations of boroughs and reorganisation. The numbers of LCC (and later GLC)

THE TIMES FRIDAY JUNE 4 1943

Obituary

FALLEN OFFICERS

"THE TIMES" LIST OF CASUALTIES

We have received news of the death of the following officers, in addition to those whose names have been published in the official lists:—

THE ARMY

GARRY, Lieut.-Colonel R. V. M., M.C., R.A.
MAHAFFY, Lieutenant F. A., Irish Guards.
PEARCE, Captain H. E., R.A.
ROBERTSON, Lieut.-Colonel S. D. G., Suffolk Regt.
WARD, Major D. E., R. Tank Regt.
WATSON, Lieutenant D., Royal Fusiliers.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

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MR. LESLIE HOWARD

DISTINGUISHED FILM AND STAGE ACTOR

Mr. Leslie Howard, who must be presumed to have lost his life while returning to this country by aeroplane from Lisbon, after having given some highly successful lectures in Spain and Portugal for the British Council, was an actor of great charm and intelligence whose death means a severe loss to the British theatre and to British films. He was 50 years of age.

Leslie Howard, whose real name was Stainer, was born in London on April 3, 1893, and was educated at Dulwich, where he wrote and acted in plays. At the outbreak of the last war he was working as a bank clerk in the City; he went into the Army, but was discharged in 1917. Theatricals at the front rekindled his love for

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

ROYAL NAVY

The Board of Admiralty regrets to announce the following casualties which have been sustained in meeting the general hazards of war. Next-of-kin have been notified:—

OFFICERS

KILLED

A/Capt. Sir T. L. Beevor, Bt., R.N.; T/Lt. D. A. Burgass, R.N.V.R.; Lt. J. L. Fraser, R.N.V.R.; Lt. P. F. S. Gould, D.S.C., R.N.; T/Sub-Lt. (A) J. H. Hodgson, R.N.V.R.; T/Spb-Lt. (A) K. R. Joll, R.N.V.R.; Rear-Admiral P. J. Mack, D.S.O.; T/Lt. (A) G. Muttrie, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. (A) G. Raynor, R.N.V.R.; T/Sub-Lt. J. N. Wishart, R.N.V.R.

ROYAL MARINES.—T/Capt. (A/Major) W. Martin.

DIED FROM WOUNDS OR INJURIES

T/Sub-Lt. (A) J. Hall, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. A. G. D. Heybyrne, R.N.V.R.

MISSING, PRESUMED KILLED

T/Lt. (A) H. V. Donald, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. R. A. Edmunds, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. D. H. Goldsmith,

The death of Major W. Martin was released by the Admiralty and was published by *The Times* in the edition of June 4 — by strange coincidence on the very day the papers reported the death of Leslie Howard which had occurred just 200 miles to the north-west as a result of another intelligence operation — only this time by the Germans. The civilian aircraft in which he was travelling was shot down after leaving Lisbon by a German fighter in the belief that it carried Winston Churchill returning from his well publicised visit to Algiers and Tunis. Churchill was very distressed to learn that the actor had lost his life because a 'thickset man smoking a cigar' had been spotted by a German agent at Lisbon airfield who radioed that Churchill was aboard in spite of the improbability of Churchill using a civil plane from the Portuguese capital.

coroners have been progressively reduced up to the present time, resulting in extremely involved changes and mergings in their areas, which I laboriously documented from the *London Gazette*. Under each reorganisation a different court, and therefore a different mortuary (they generally abutt the courts), became the central one for the new area. There was in the British Library an edition of the *National Association of Funeral Director's Yearbook* for 1960 which gave a list of public mortuaries, but this was not necessarily a complete guide, or the situation in 1943.

The NAFD proved most unhelpful when I enquired about earlier editions of their directory, and it was impossible to determine if they had produced earlier ones. The Greater London Council archives finally did a magnificent research job on my behalf and located documents relating to a just post-war discussion on the fate of the Council's mortuaries which gave what purported to be a definitive list. From all sources I eventually identified twenty-nine mortuaries! They also possessed a magnificent bound set of reductions of the five feet to the mile 1930s Ordnance Survey maps, which showed every tram route, cinema and mortuary.

Working from the maps was a much better idea than trudging all the present-day streets, and I scanned them with a large lens looking for a conjunction of the three criteria of tram route/cinema/mortuary. There was no such grouping. The best fit was at Greenwich, where the mortuary was directly behind a cinema, but a short piece of public road had to be negotiated between the two. This was a tram route, but on the conduit system, so there would have been no standards; however all the overhead system had by this time been converted to trolleybuses, so the only places one saw trams was in the conduit areas. It did not fit the extra criterion introduced in the *Sunday Express* article, that the queue was 'opposite' the mortuary. Unfortunately the cinema was a flea-pit known locally as 'The Blue Lights', which was such a shoestring operation that the local press advertisements did not cover it. It is therefore well nigh impossible to discover the film that was showing that night and so add a confirmer — newly released films, though, such as *Underground Agent* would not have penetrated so far down market, whereas *Spy in Black* was four years old, and so would have been more likely.

Fulham Palace Road mortuary (whose deputy coroner had dealt with Harrison) did have opposite it, but almost out of view, the Gaumont (now the Odeon), and it was on the overhead system, but the films showing were *Katina* and *Fires were Started* — not very likely.

In a less likely location, but much more likely otherwise, was Purchase's second mortuary in Hackney, where again a short drive down a private road led to a building opposite which had been a cinema pre-war, and was on an overhead system route. However, it seems pretty clear that the cinema — another flea-pit — had been converted to James Brooke and Sons, House Furnishers, before the war, but I cannot be absolutely certain. There are a lot of cinemas

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

Application Number PSR B68025

Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages (Special Provisions) Act 1957

An Entry in the Naval Officers War Records of Deaths 1939-1948

Name (Surname First)	Decorations (if any)	Rank	Branch of Service	Ship or Unit	Date of Death	Cause of Death
MARTIN William		Act. Major	R.M.	Royal Marines	On or before 1.5.1943	On War Service

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of *the certified copy of** an entry made in a Service Departments Register.

Given at the General Register Office, London, under the seal of the said Office, the 4th day of November 19 85.

*If the certificate is given from the original Register the words "the certified copy of" are struck out.

Section 3(2) of the above mentioned Act provides that "The enactments relating to the registration of births and deaths and marriages in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (which contain provisions authorising the admission in evidence of, and of extracts from, certified copies of registers and duplicate registers) shall have effect as if the Service Departments Registers were certified copies or duplicate registers transmitted to the Registrar General in accordance with those enactments."

SA 040476

CAUTION:—It is an offence to falsify a certificate or to make or knowingly use a false certificate or a copy of a false certificate intending it to be accepted as genuine to the prejudice of any person, or to possess a certificate knowing it to be false without lawful authority.

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE ENGLAND

Britain's tribute to the rôle played by 'the man who never was' was carried through to the full with the inclusion of his name in the Naval Officers War Records. Just how effective his part had been in the war was yet to be revealed.

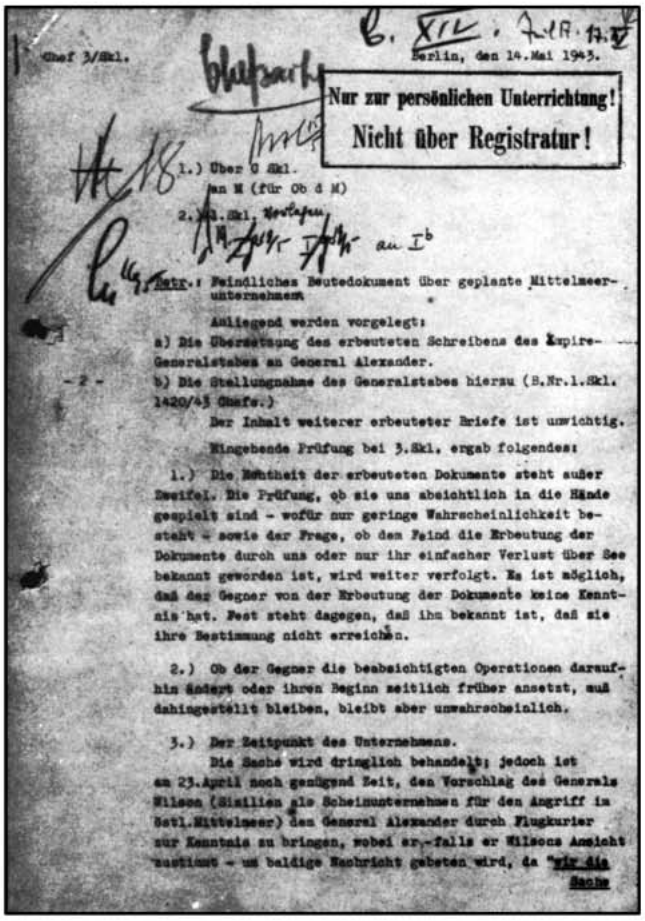
When the briefcase was returned to the British Naval Attaché in Madrid by the Spanish Chief of Naval Staff on May 13, at first sight the seals on the envelopes were still intact. However forensic examination revealed that each had been carefully opened and resealed. This enlargement of a section of the Nye letter shows clearly a double fold where the paper was refolded after being dried out. It was positive evidence of intervention by Spanish Intelligence but yet did not prove that the information had been shared with the Germans.

quite near in Mare Street, past which they could have driven as they made their way to Cholmondeley's flat for a bite to eat before setting off for Scotland — his flat, as I discovered, being in Queen's Gate, South Kensington.

The mortuary photograph in Montagu's *The Man Who Never Was* shows a very small portion of the floor, which is divided into large panels, about four feet square. I initially assumed this to be an encouraging peculiarity, but it seems that it is standard construction for mortuary floors.

My interview with Montagu

Having assembled as much information as I could, I sought an interview with Montagu himself. Fortunately I lived in virtually the same street as his birthplace, and within three streets of his address, which was easily ascertainable from *Who's Who*. I had in fact had some preliminary contact by letter several years before. He was initially reluctant; I suppose a Judge must make many enemies, or I could have been an out and out crank, but finally he took the chance and I must say



Chef 3/Skl. Berlin, den 14.Mai 1943.

Nur zur persönlichen Unterrichtung!
Nicht über Registratur!

1.) Über 0 Skl.
an M (für Ob d M)
2. Skl. Kortzfleisch
an I^b

Betr.: Feindliches Beutedokument über geplante Mittelmeer-unternehmen

Anliegend werden vorgelegt:

a) Die Übersetzung des erbeuteten Schreibens des Empire-Generalstabes an General Alexander.

b) Die Stellungnahme des Generalstabes hierzu (S.Nr.1.Skl. 1420/43 Chefs.)

- 2 -

Der Inhalt weiterer erbeuteter Briefe ist unwichtig.

Eingehende Prüfung bei 3.Skl. ergab folgendes:

1.) Die Echtheit der erbeuteten Dokumente steht außer Zweifel. Die Prüfung, ob sie uns absichtlich in die Hände gespielt sind - wofür nur geringe Wahrscheinlichkeit besteht - sowie der Frage, ob dem Feind die Erbeutung der Dokumente durch uns oder nur ihr einfacher Verlust über See bekannt geworden ist, wird weiter verfolgt. Es ist möglich, daß der Gegner von der Erbeutung der Dokumente keine Kenntnis hat. Fest steht dagegen, daß ihm bekannt ist, daß sie ihre Bestimmung nicht erreichen.

2.) Ob der Gegner die beabsichtigten Operationen daraufhin ändert oder ihren Beginn zeitlich früher ansetzt, muß dahingestellt bleiben, bleibt aber unwahrscheinlich.

3.) Der Zeitpunkt des Unternehmens.

Die Sache wird dringlich behandelt; jedoch ist am 23.April noch genügend Zeit, den Vorschlag des Generals Wilson (Sizilien als Scheinunternehmen für den Angriff im Bstl.Mittelmeer) den General Alexander durch Flugkurier zur Kenntnis zu bringen, wobei er, falls er Wilsons Ansicht zustimmt - um baldige Nachricht gebeten wird, da "wir die Sache

When Ewan Montagu's book was published (1953), the knowledge that the Allies had been deciphering German signals throughout the war was still a closely guarded secret. Thus Montagu had to cover up the fact that British Intelligence knew for sure *within three days* from Ultra decodes that the Germans had accepted the letters as being genuine. Between May and July 10 when Operation 'Husky' took place, many redeployments of German troops reinforced this knowledge but it was not until the end of the war that it was possible to assess just how far the Abwehr had been duped. When the German naval archives were captured at Tambach a file was discovered on the Martin papers in which this document was an appreciation of the Nye letter. Stamped 'To be circulated personally! Not through Registry!' it was marked for the personal attention of Grossadmiral Dönitz (Ob d M). His initial under the cross on the top left confirms that he saw it. (A translation appears on the right.)

TRANSLATION

Subject: Captured Enemy Document on Mediterranean Operations.

Attached herewith are:

(a) Translation of the captured letter from the Imperial Staff to General Alexander.
(b) Appreciation thereof by the (German) General Staff.

The contents of further captured documents are unimportant. Exhaustive examination by 3 Skl. revealed the following:

1. The genuineness of the captured documents is above suspicion. The suggestion that they have intentionally fallen into our hands — of which the probability is slight — and the question whether the enemy is aware of the capture of the documents by us or only of their loss at sea is being followed up. It is possible that the enemy has no knowledge of the capture of the documents.

Against that it is certain that he knows they did not reach their destination.

2. Whether the enemy will now alter his intended operations or will set an earlier date for their commencement must be taken into consideration, but seems unlikely.

3. *Probable Date of the Operation*

The latter is being treated as urgent; yet there is still time on the 23rd April to inform General Alexander by air courier of General Wilson's proposal to use Sicily as cover-target for the assault in the Eastern Mediterranean, wherein he is requested to reply immediately in the event of his supporting Wilson's opinion, "as we cannot postpone the matter much longer." In this case the Imperial General Staff considers altering the planning both in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean, for which there is still time.

4. *Sequence of the Operations*

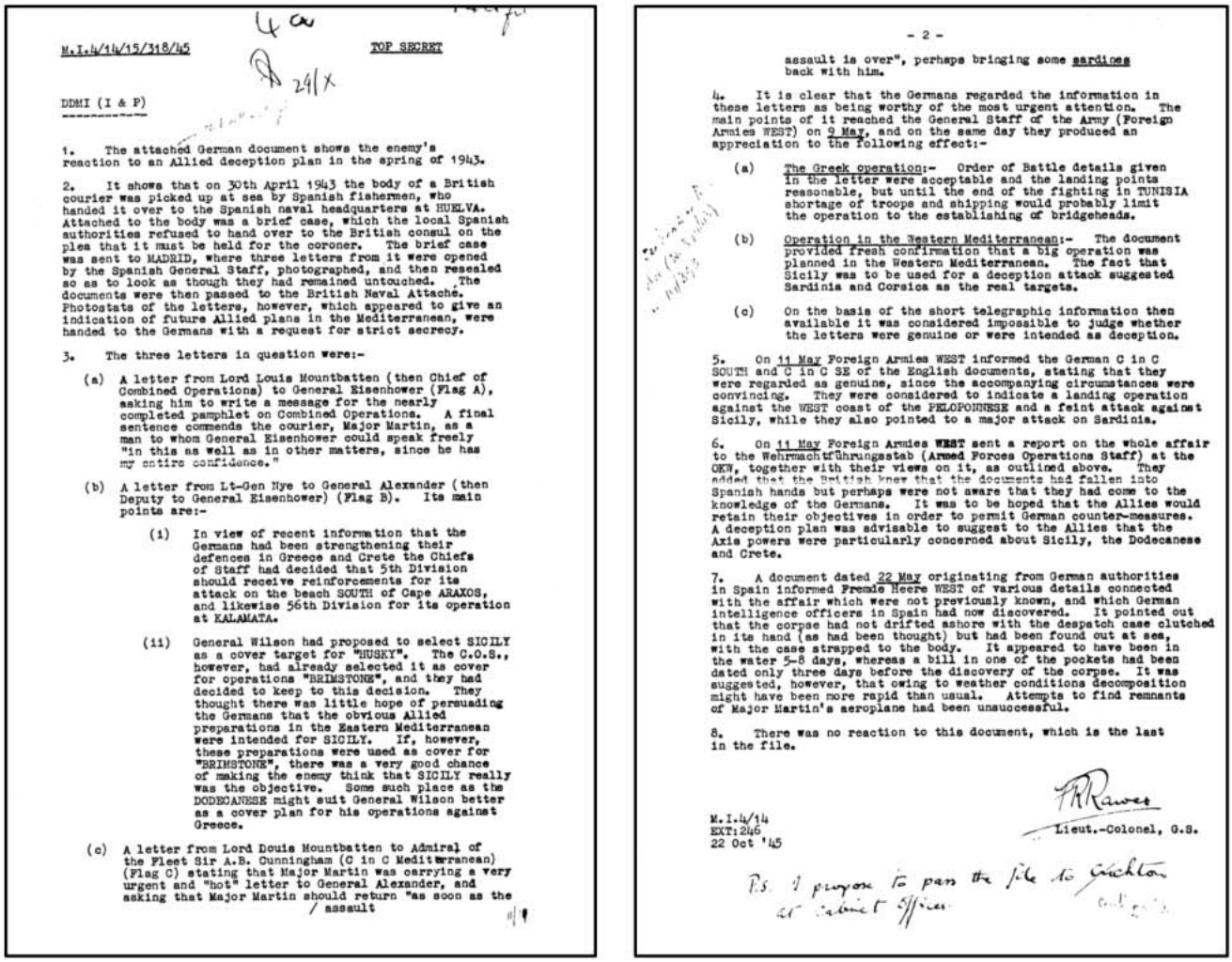
It is presumed that both operations will take place simultaneously, since Sicily is unsuitable as a cover-target simultaneously for both.

5. The Tobruk area comes into consideration as a starting-point for the operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. Alexandria is not considered, as in this case Sicily would have been absurd as a cover-target.

6. It is not clear whether the deception worked by the cover-target concerns only the period up to the beginning of the operations or whether in fact a cover-operation would be used as well as the actual assault.

7. It is *not* clear from the attached whether *only* the 5th and 56th Divisions will be landed in the Eastern Mediterranean (at Araxos and Kalamata). However *only* these two divisions are to be reinforced for their assault. It is always possible that all assault troops and targets are included with them.

8. It should be emphasised that it is obvious from this document that big preparations are in course in the Eastern Mediterranean as well. This is important, because considerably less intelligence about preparations has reached us from this area than from Algeria, owing to their geographical situation.



M.I.4/14/15/318/45 TOP SECRET

DDMI (I & P)

1. The attached German document shows the enemy's reaction to an Allied deception plan in the spring of 1943.

2. It shows that on 30th April 1943 the body of a British courier was picked up at sea by Spanish fishermen, who handed it over to the Spanish naval headquarters at HUELVA. Attached to the body was a brief case, which the local Spanish authorities refused to hand over to the British consul on the plea that it must be held for the coroner. The brief case was sent to MADRID, where three letters from it were opened by the Spanish General Staff, photographed, and then resealed so as to look as though they had remained untouched. The documents were then passed to the British Naval Attaché. Photostats of the letters, however, which appeared to give an indication of future Allied plans in the Mediterranean, were handed to the Germans with a request for strict secrecy.

3. The three letters in question were:-

(a) A letter from Lord Louis Mountbatten (then Chief of Combined Operations) to General Eisenhower (Flag A), asking him to write a message for the nearly completed pamphlet on Combined Operations. A final sentence commends the courier, Major Martin, as a man to whom General Eisenhower could speak freely "in this as well as in other matters, since he has my entire confidence."

(b) A letter from Lt-Gen Nye to General Alexander (then Deputy to General Eisenhower) (Flag B). Its main points are:-

(i) In view of recent information that the Germans had been strengthening their defences in Greece and Crete the Chiefs of Staff had decided that 5th Division should receive reinforcements for its attack on the beach SOUTH of Cape ARAXOS, and likewise 56th Division for its operation at KALAMATA.

(ii) General Wilson had proposed to select SICILY as a cover target for "HUSKY". The C.O.S., however, had already selected it as cover for operations "BRIMSTONE", and they had decided to keep to this decision. They thought there was little hope of persuading the Germans that the obvious Allied preparations in the Eastern Mediterranean were intended for SICILY. If, however, these preparations were used as cover for "BRIMSTONE", there was a very good chance of making the enemy think that SICILY really was the objective. Some such place as the DODECANESE might suit General Wilson better as a cover plan for his operations against Greece.

(c) A letter from Lord Louis Mountbatten to Admiral of the Fleet Sir A.B. Cunningham (C in C Mediterranean) (Flag C) stating that Major Martin was carrying a very urgent and "hot" letter to General Alexander, and asking that Major Martin should return "as soon as the assault

- 2 -

assault is over", perhaps bringing some sardines back with him.

4. It is clear that the Germans regarded the information in these letters as being worthy of the most urgent attention. The main points of it reached the General Staff of the Army (Foreign Armies WEST) on 9 May, and on the same day they produced an appreciation to the following effect:-

(a) The Greek operation:- Order of Battle details given in the letter were acceptable and the landing points reasonable, but until the end of the fighting in TUNISIA shortage of troops and shipping would probably limit the operation to the establishing of bridgeheads.

(b) Operation in the Western Mediterranean:- The document provided fresh confirmation that a big operation was planned in the Western Mediterranean. The fact that Sicily was to be used for a deception attack suggested Sardinia and Corsica as the real targets.

(c) On the basis of the short telegraphic information then available it was considered impossible to judge whether the letters were genuine or were intended as deception.

5. On 11 May Foreign Armies WEST informed the German C in C SOUTH and C in C SE of the English documents, stating that they were regarded as genuine, since the accompanying circumstances were convincing. They were considered to indicate a landing operation against the WEST coast of the PELOPONNESE and a feint attack against Sicily, while they also pointed to a major attack on Sardinia.

6. On 11 May Foreign Armies WEST sent a report on the whole affair to the Wehrmachtführungsstab (Armed Forces Operations Staff) at the OKW, together with their views on it, as outlined above. They added that the British knew that the documents had fallen into Spanish hands but perhaps were not aware that they had come to the knowledge of the Germans. It was to be hoped that the Allies would retain their objectives in order to permit German counter-measures. A deception plan was advisable to suggest to the Allies that the Axis powers were particularly concerned about Sicily, the Dodecanese and Crete.

7. A document dated 22 May originating from German authorities in Spain informed Fremde Heere WEST of various details connected with the affair which were not previously known, and which German intelligence officers in Spain had now discovered. It pointed out that the corpse had not drifted ashore with the despatch case clutched in its hand (as had been thought) but had been found out at sea, with the case strapped to the body. It appeared to have been in the water 5-8 days, whereas a bill in one of the pockets had been dated only three days before the discovery of the corpse. It was suggested, however, that owing to weather conditions decomposition might have been more rapid than usual. Attempts to find remnants of Major Martin's aeroplane had been unsuccessful.

8. There was no reaction to this document, which is the last in the file.

Lieut.-Colonel, G.S.

M.I.4/14
EXT:246
22 Oct '45

P.S. I propose to pass the file to Gichton at Cabinet Offices

This analysis was produced by MI4 (Interpretation and Photographic section) on the complete captured German file.

that he and his wife were charming. He had also lost none of his advocate's skill or sharpness of mind, and although courteous was intent, quite properly, on telling me nothing! In conversation with him I did nonetheless glean a few snippets of extra information. I gathered that:

As he was a member of the Inter Services Security Board, which devised the code-words, he himself had been able to make a free choice from the list assigned to the Admiralty.

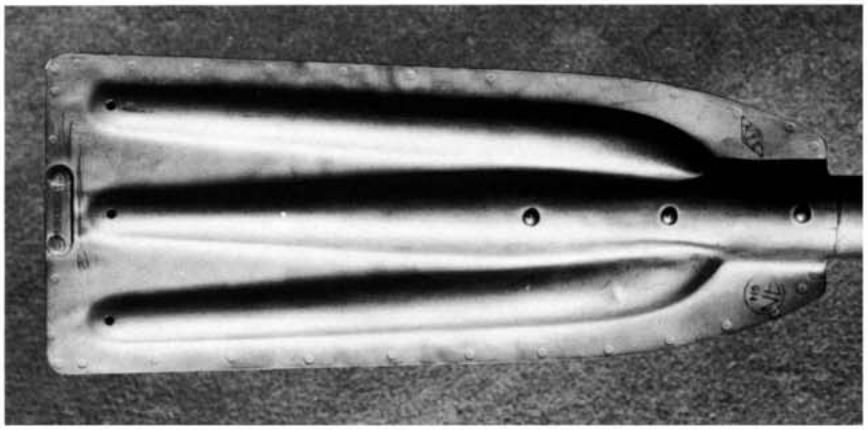
The incident off Cadiz did not provide the idea.

The body was stored in a London County Council Coroner's mortuary, which from a previous letter he thought was south of the river. He said that Piekalkiewicz's photograph of the body in a hospital mortuary was rubbish.

The man shown in Montagu's mortuary photograph was Purchase's Officer (presumably Fred Shrieve). This photograph, and some of the other's were HMSO copyright, whereas the remainder, for example he and Jock Horsfall by the van, were his private photographs (they had taken it in turns to photograph each other).

It was not necessarily a tram standard; it could have been a lamppost, and it was in the middle of the road. The mortuary, cinema and post/standard were in close proximity.

They were sufficiently confident in the double-cross system to be sure that no German agent could cross check in this country (for a simple check of the birth records would have revealed Major Martin to be false). The fictitious checking-up on Martin's existence by a German agent had been made the central theme of the second half of the film, in which Balchin wove together some ingenious twists in the plot.



Left: **The sole surviving material relic in England is this paddle, retained by Montagu in Scotland when the RAF dinghy was put aboard the *Seraph*.** *Right:* **He was given this ship's crest salvaged from the submarine when she was broken up in 1965.**

So just who was 'Major Martin'? Charles Cholmondeley died in June 1982 and Ewan Montagu in July 1985 — both having kept true to the pledge they gave to the next of kin not to reveal the identity — a pre-condition to the use of the body in the first place. With Sir Bernard Spilsbury having committed suicide in December 1947, and Sir Bentley Purchase being killed when he fell from the roof of his farm at Ipswich in September 1961, the trail was quite cold, yet Roger Morgan has spent more than five years researching every aspect of the operation. After exhaustive enquiries to put a name to the man without a name, the most likely candidate is a 33-year-old man who was living here in a hostel for homeless men in Parker Street, not far from Holborn tube station, when he died in Archway Hospital.

The corpse had a real death certificate, and the problem of the registrar wanting confirmation of disposal was dealt with completely legally.

Cholmondeley's flat (from which they started the journey north) was in a nearby mews.

He had never visited the grave in Huelva. [The film has him laying his CBE ribbon on the slab.]

I asked him if he had promised the relatives that he personally would never reveal the name, or that the British Government would not? He could not, I suggested, be expected to break a personal vow of secrecy, but if the Government was not constrained I could have been shown the file. He refused to comment.

Finally I asked his opinion on Harrison's death certificate, even though I did not think he was a particularly good candidate. It is difficult to be sure in the heat of the moment but it seemed to me that he looked at it for longer than would be normal, and fixedly at one spot as though deciding what to do. The moment broke and he handed me it back, merely repeating the name for the benefit of his wife.

As I left I was shown his trophies on the hall wall, an heraldic *Seraph* crest salvaged from her breaking up, and the second lightweight metal oar from Major Martin's dinghy (only one was put into the water) with a small plaque reading 'Mincemeat'.

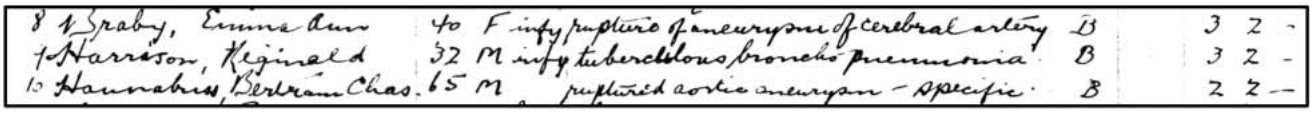
As the front door closed behind me there occurred one of those never to be recovered moments in life which one forever regrets not being quick-witted enough to take advantage of. Through the door I heard the receding comment, 'Well, that's an example of . . . ' If only I had overcome my genteel upbringing and pressed my ear to the closing door! Only five more words could have recovered the solution. An example of what? Of nothing being kept secret for ever? Of a crank with nothing better to do? I shall never know.

Conclusions

I had now exhausted all my lines of research, and so I resigned myself to an inconclusive result and wrote the main body of this article. Halfway through I resolved on one last effort, and trawled all the Inner London coroners for their opinions, in the hope of tapping the myths of the medico-legal grapevine. This came up trumps!

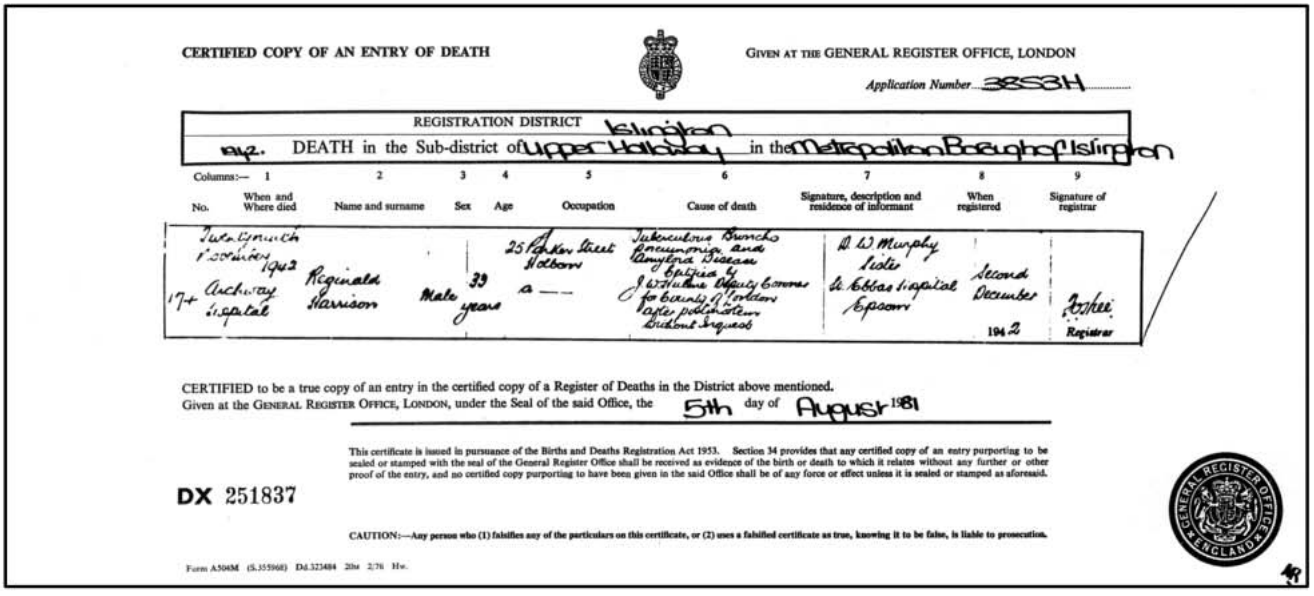
The present Northern District mortuary superintendent, Mr Henry Marshall, confirmed that the mortuary used was Hackney, and I examined the interior with the kind assistance of Mr R. W. Bradford of Hackney Environmental Health Department. The relationship of the terrazzo floor panels, coved skirting and dissection table matched exactly the photograph in the PRO file and Montagu's *The Man Who Never Was*. There is no doubt that the identification is correct! Further the body proved to be resting on a cold-storage tray propped against a mortuary trolley, both of identical construction to those still existing.

However, there was no cinema within a reasonable distance to the south that was showing a likely film; neither is Hackney south of the river. I must regretfully conclude that either Montagu's memory compacted the incidents described unjustifiably or he consciously, both when he wrote his account and later, obfuscated the location.



8 1 Graby, Emma Ann 40 F infty rupture of aneurysm of cerebral artery B 3 2 -
1+ Harrison, Reginald 32 M infty tuberculous broncho pneumonia B 3 2 -
15 Hannabus, Bertram Chas. 65 M ruptured aortic aneurysm - Apoplexie B 2 2 --

The cause of death fits the one specified by Spilsbury, the location was within the jurisdiction of Purchase; and Harrison fits the description given by Montagu of being 'in his early thirties' and having 'died alone . . . in the late autumn of 1942'.



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH

GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON

Application Number 3858H

REGISTRATION DISTRICT Islington

1942. DEATH in the Sub-district of Upper Holloway in the Metropolitan Borough of Islington

Columns:— 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and Where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
17	Twenty-ninth December 1942 Archway Hospital	Reginald Harrison	Male	39 years	25 Parker Street Holborn a —	Tuberculous Broncho Pneumonia, and Pulmonary Disease Certified by J. W. Hulbert Deputy Coroner for County of London After post-mortem Examination and Inquest	D. W. Murphy Visitor St. Ebbas Hospital Epsom	Second December 1942	Registrar

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.
Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, LONDON, under the Seal of the said Office, the 5th day of August 1981

This certificate is issued in pursuance of the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953. Section 34 provides that any certified copy of an entry purporting to be sealed or stamped with the seal of the General Register Office shall be received as evidence of the birth or death to which it relates without any further or other proof of the entry, and no certified copy purporting to have been given in the said Office shall be of any force or effect unless it is sealed or stamped as aforesaid.

DX 251837

CAUTION:—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.

Form A504M (S.355968) Dd.323484 20m 2/76 Hw.

GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE ENGLAND

'In life he had done little for his country; but in death he did more than most could achieve by a lifetime of service.' The final tribute from The Hon. Ewan Montagu who never visited the last resting place of Major Martin under the sunny skies of Spain. It was left to his screen counterpart to unofficially decorate him with his own MBE as a moving climax to the film. Montagu: 'It was up to us to see that his last resting place should be a fitting one . . . even if all this had to be done under pseudonyms.' In actual fact the inclusion of a false date of birth on the gravestone — there are no William, or even W., Martin's born on March 29, 1907 — would have immediately raised the suspicions of any German agent checking the Register of Births. However when Roger questioned him on this point, Montagu said they had nothing to fear as they were confident through the Double-Cross Committee that there were no genuine German spies operating in the UK.

Making the major assumption that the body was a London coroner's (implicit in Montagu's answers to my questions), it would seem too much of a coincidence that Harrison has roughly the right age, date of death, disease and coroner; and appears to be what one might expect. Against this must be set his grave in Islington. I have so far been able to determine nothing of his past or surviving relations, and I would appeal to any of them to contact me.

Whether Harrison or not, my guess is that the Removal from England procedure was used, and this may or may not survive in the ten per cent of Purchase's files that are in the Greater London Record Office. Hopefully these survived the dissolution of the GLC, and will be searchable in 2043 — by which time the Cabinet Office File will hopefully be transferred to the Public Records Office. I will be 96, and, God willing, will be waiting at the door!

Did Cholmondeley and Montagu cover their tracks to the extent of having an empty coffin buried here in Grave 23400 which is listed as containing one, Reginald Harrison? We shall probably never know the secret held by Plot L at St Pancras and Islington Cemetery in High Road, Finchley, where his simple common grave lies unmarked, abandoned and forgotten.

76

UNKNOWN MALOELAP

BY WILLIAM H. BARTSCH

On the eve of the outbreak of the Pacific War, the greatest threat to the American naval base at Pearl Harbor and the Pacific Fleet based there was believed to be from the Japanese-occupied Marshall Islands, only 2,000 miles to the south-west and the nearest Japanese territory to Hawaii. The islands of the Marshalls offered ideal jumping-off points from which the powerful surface, air, and submarine forces of the Imperial Japanese Navy could attack Hawaii as well as sever American communications lines to the Philippines.

Under the mandate provisions of the Versailles Treaty, the Marshall Islands had come under the control of Japan in 1920. From then until the outbreak of the Pacific War, Japanese plans for, and activities on, these islands remained a closely-guarded secret, though it was assumed the mandates were being fortified. However, military development of the Marshalls, except on Kwajalein Atoll, did not begin in actuality until early 1941, following completion of a survey of the Marshalls conducted by the Japanese Navy late in 1939. Improvements in warships and naval weapons, especially the introduction of the heavy land-based bomber, had obliged the Japanese to re-evaluate the importance of the Marshalls and concentrate more heavily on their defense.

In January 1941, the 6th Naval Base Force and the 24th Naval Air Flotilla were organised and assigned to the Marshall Islands. These units had been put under the overall command of the 4th Fleet, which since late 1939 had been charged with protecting the whole mandated area, extending 2,400 miles from Palau in the west to the Marshalls in the east. In early 1941, the Japanese launched an ambitious program of military construction in the outer Marshalls, building airfields, fortifications, barracks, and fuel storage facilities. Guard units under the 6th Base Force arrived in the fall of that year to provide defense of Jaluit, Wotje, and Maloelap. By November 1941, air facilities were far enough advanced for operation of the 24th Flotilla's Chitose Air Group's fighters and bombers on Wotje and Maloelap and the Yokohama Air Group's flying boats on Jaluit. Earlier assigned to Kwajalein were aircraft of the Chitose Group as well as the headquarters of the 24th Flotilla.

The easternmost of the atolls being developed by the Japanese, Maloelap was intended as the principal outlying base for the 24th Flotilla's main force on Roi in Kwajalein Atoll, 200 miles to the west of Maloelap. On the island of Taroa at the far end of Maloelap Atoll, the Japanese utilising Marshallese and Japanese civilian labor, by war's outbreak had built a well-equipped airbase, which included two long runways reaching to the ends of the small island,

Top: **Taroa Island, cornerstone of Japan's naval air bastion on Maloelap Atoll in the Marshalls, photographed from an aircraft from the USS *Natoma Bay* on February 14, 1944.** *Above:* **Almost the same view in January 1986 by our intrepid Pacific observer Bill Bartsch. Dense vegetation has covered the scars of war but the NE-SW runway has been kept serviceable for the inter-island air link.**

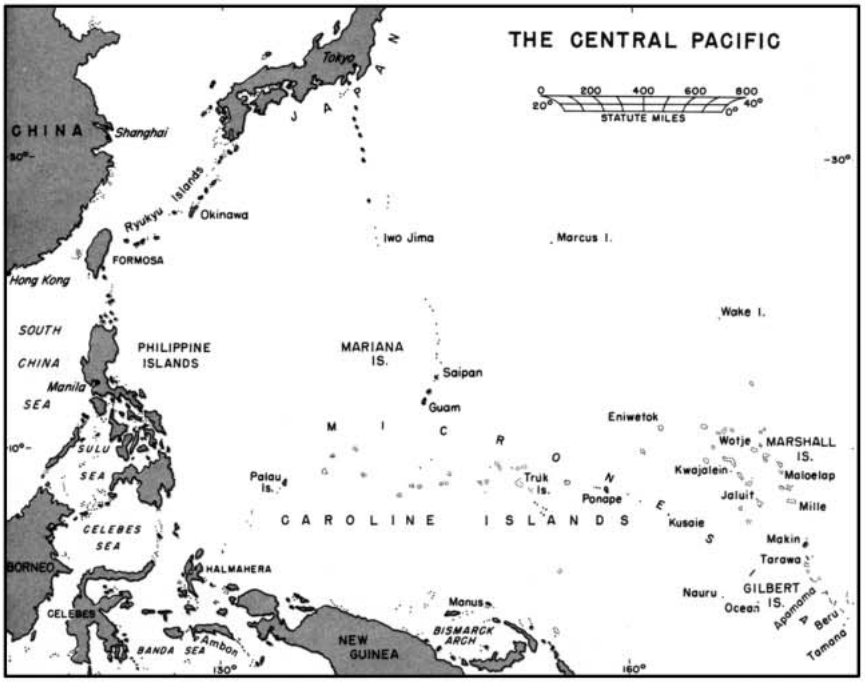
hangars, shops, service aprons, aircraft revetments, and barracks.

Although in the event the Marshalls played no role in the December 7 attack on Pearl Harbor *(see After the Battle, No. 38)* to open the Pacific War, they still represented a threat to Hawaii and American communication lines. Thus they were considered a prime target for the first offensive action by the carriers of the Pacific Fleet. On February 1, 1942, *Enterprise* launched dawn strikes against Kwajalein, Wotje, and Maloelap, which were opposed by Japanese fighters of the Chitose Group. The pilots of the Grumman Wildcats were surprised to find a 'first class' airbase at Taroa, which reminded them of their own Ford Island at Pearl Harbor.

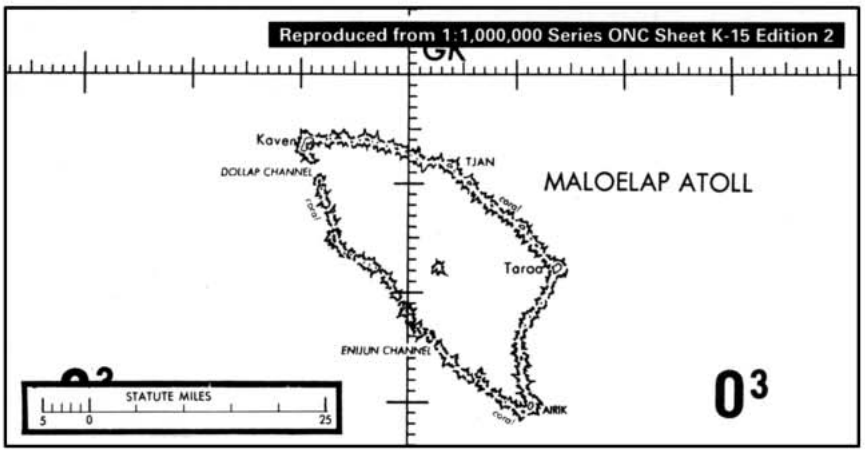
However, from the time of the carrier raid until Operation Galvanic in November 1943, the Marshalls were involved in neither offensive nor defensive actions, as the war raged to the north-west (Midway) and south-west (Solomons and Papua New Guinea). During this quiet period, further construction was carried out and the 6th Base Force was expanded. The south Marshalls atoll of Mille was transformed from a look-out station to a major air base, while installations and fortifications on Kwajalein, Jaluit, Maloelap, and Wotje were constantly improved. But with the destruction of the Japanese positions in the Solomons and Papua New Guinea, the Marshalls and their southern neighbours, the Gilberts, were increasingly exposed to American attack. Accordingly, Japanese strategy was revised to provide for fighting a delaying action in the Marshalls. Army reinforcements were sent in September 1943 to Mille, Kwajalein, Jaluit, Wotje, and Maloelap to supplement those of the Navy.

By this time, Maloelap had become the most important of the air bases in the outer Marshalls in terms of fighter protection for the other atolls. Assigned to the Taroa base was a large detachment of Zeros of the 252 Naval Air Group, which since March 1943 was responsible for the air defense of the Marshalls. A number of Betty twin-engine bombers of the 755 Naval Air Group were also intermittently stationed on Taroa during this period.

Beginning in early November 1943, in support of the imminent Operation Galvanic for the seizure of the Gilberts, continuous 7th Air Force strikes against Maloelap, Mille, Kwajalein, Wotje, and Jaluit were causing serious aircraft losses for the Japanese and damage to facilities. Then with the invasion of the Gilberts late in November 1943 (*see After the Battle, No. 15)*, plans



The Marshall Islands were sold by Spain to Germany after the Spanish-American war in 1898 and seized from Germany by Japan in 1914, in which war of course Japan sided with the Allies. In 1919 the League of Nations mandated them to Japan and, following their occupation by US forces in World War II, since 1947 they have been administered by America under United Nations trusteeship.



During the 1944 air strikes on Taroa, B–25s streak in at low level over the NW-SE runway using their 75mm cannons to help neutralise Japanese anti-aircraft fire. Note the gun emplacements along the beach — these are the 127mm guns of Point 3.

With the Japanese freighter *Toroshima Maru* sitting on the bottom of the lagoon, the Stars and Stripes flutter above the battered concrete pier — a picture from the United States Stragetic Bombing Survey of the island in 1945.

In 1986 Bill climbed to the same vantage point on the top of the radio station to take an idyllic comparison. The hut on the pier is the local co-op society building.

were finalised for the assault on the Marshalls, an action that had formed part of American Pacific strategy ever since the pre-war Orange Plan was adopted. Under Operation Flintlock, Kwajalein would be seized in late January 1944, as would the lightly-defended atoll of Majuro. To keep Kwajalein isolated, the carriers of Task Force 58 would strike the Japanese airbases in the Marshalls in advance of the landings and provide continuous air cover, followed by battleship bombardment of the fields to keep them from being repaired or reinforced.

Assigned to destroy and keep suppressed the Taroa base was Air Group 10 of the carrier *Enterprise*. At 8.00 a.m. on January 29, 1944, the *Enterprise* pilots struck the island, now pock-marked from the bombings of the B-24s of the 7th Air Force. On the same day, other Task Groups of TF 58 hit Kwajalein and Wotje. After the follow-up attacks the next day, Japanese aircraft and shipping in the Marshalls were virtually completely wiped out. Then on January 31, American troops landed on Kwajalein Atoll and four days later the key island and the Roi-Namur airfields were secured.

Over Taroa on January 29, pilots of the 252 Group engaged a far superior force of Hellcats, Dauntlesses, and Avengers for what proved to be the Group's last combat of the Marshalls campaign. Surviving Japanese aircrew of the 252 Group on Wotje and Maloelap were evacuated by six flying boats and two Bettys on the evening of February 5, 1944 to Truk.

Although Taroa and Wotje ceased to function as air bases after the departure of the 252 Group, they were still subjected to regular American air raids in an effort to ensure that no further air operations could be mounted from the fields. Through June 1944 they provided bombing practice opportunities for the B-24s and B-25s of the 7th Air Force and right up to the August 1945 surrender of Japan *(see After the Battle No. 50)*, bombing and strafing practice for the dive-bombers and fighters of the 4th Marine Air Wing. The only opposition to these attacks was from anti-aircraft fire.

More serious than air raids to the 3,400 Army, Navy, and civilian personnel left on bypassed Maloelap was the growing shortage of food. No ships were able to reach Taroa after the last arrived in mid-January 1944, and 40 percent of the earlier supplies had been destroyed in air attacks. Some fresh produce could be grown on the other islands of Maloelap Atoll for the Japanese garrison, but it was not enough. From November 1944 to the end of the war, an average of three to five Japanese died each day from starvation. Only 1,070 of the garrison survived, some one-third of its total, with 1,251 dead from starvation, 566 killed in air raids, 76 dying from wounds and 153 from disease.

It was a tragic end for the once-formidable naval air base.

Taroa 1986

Damaged externally by three near misses from 1,000lb bombs, internally the air operations building (Point 46 on the USSBS plan overleaf) remained intact. Forty years on it provides a home for 16 people.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

Right on schedule, the new twin-engine Dornier 228 of the Airline of the Marshall Islands lifted off the Majuro airstrip at 8.00 a.m. on its once-a-week flight to Wotje and Maloelap. The three days I had spent exploring Taroa Island on my first trip to Maloelap Atoll in August 1984 had proven inadequate for the task — surprisingly, there were more war remains there than I had expected. This time I would have a full week, having arranged the necessary leave from my four-week United Nations mission to the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

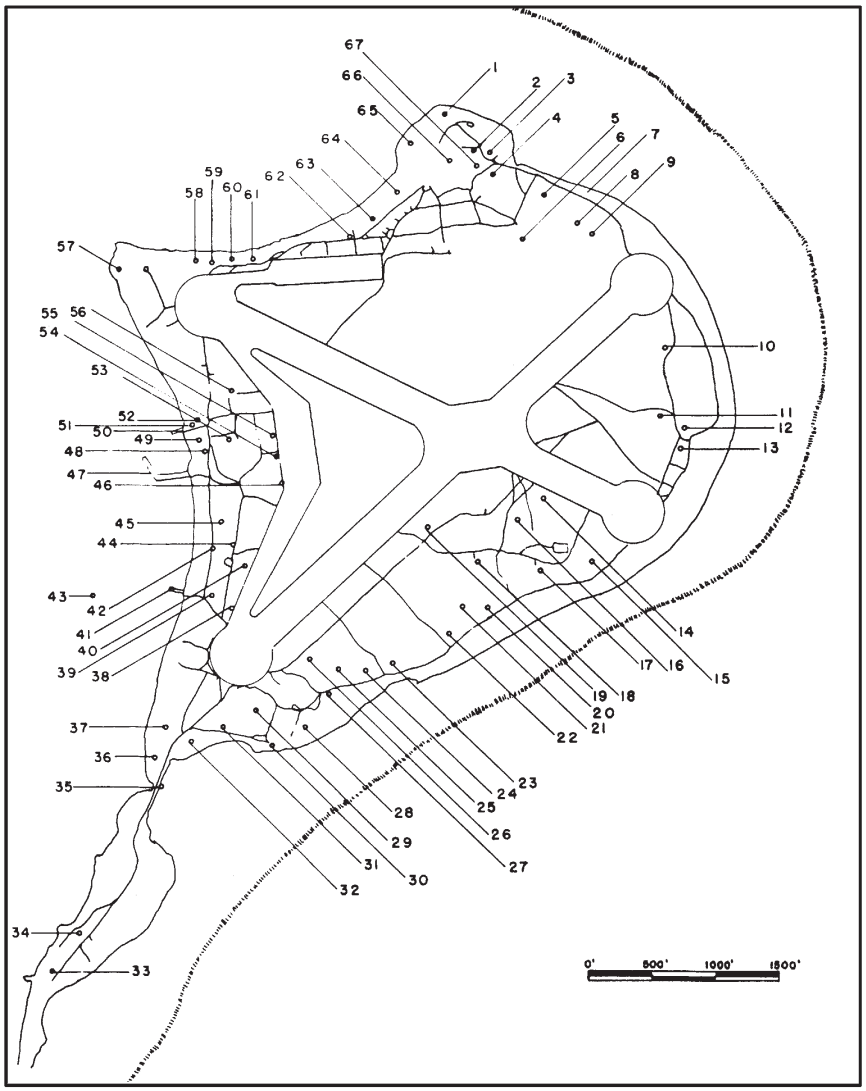
After a brief stop at Wotje, we took off again for Maloelap at 9.10 a.m. I had talked to the pilot, Helbert Alfred, about the reason for my trip, and he had asked me if I would like to sit in the co-pilot seat during the 20-minute hop to Taroa from Wotje so as to get some good views of the island from the air. Now, after the seat belt sign had gone off, I climbed into the seat, taking care not to bump any of the controls in the tight space. Helbert helped me to strap myself in and gave me the earphone headset. What an array of instruments in the Dornier! Helbert showed me how all the information regarding the flight was computerised — the figures flashed before me in the display area between our seats as he pushed buttons.

Purchase of the Dornier had cost the Government over a million dollars, but it was proving its worth. The airline had been obliged to suspend its service to most of the Marshalls' outer islands after my first trip to Maloelap due to the constant repairs required for the two Nomad aircraft it was flying at the time. Service had only been reintroduced a month before my return trip to the Marshalls when the Dornier had been received from West Germany. Now it is expected that a regular schedule of flights to the outer islands can be maintained, a service so vital to the needs of their inhabitants.

Not only the plane, but the pilot was different on my second trip to Taroa. Helbert was Marshallese, the first local person to qualify as a commercial pilot. Now with the other New Zealand pilot on home leave, he was operating the new Dornier himself. I was impressed with his familiarity with the aircraft and his professional competence, nicely complementing his informal Marshallese personality.

As we approached Taroa on this wonderfully sunny and clear morning, Helbert swung the Dornier into an unscheduled turn around the island so that I could shoot a range of views. Then at my request he moved up to 1,500 from 1,000 feet to afford me a better angle from which to photograph the verdant island and its wartime NE-SW strip now once more in service.

As we taxied down the rough surfaced field to the simple reception area, I spotted Tartious Zackious, my guide from the August 1984 visit, who is AMI's representative on Taroa. Climbing out of the aircraft, I was welcomed by Tartious, but he expressed surprise — through a mix-up he hadn't been informed by the airline of my arrival!



1 Blockhouse, 2 Generator, 3 12.7 dual-purpose gun, 4 Ammunition magazine, 5 Radar, 6 Uncompleted radio communications, 7 Blockhouse, 8 Radio receiving station, 9 Coast defense guns (15 centimeter), 10 Concrete command post, 11 Bomb storage, 12 Blockhouse, 13 12.7 dual-purpose gun, 14 Fighter revetment, 15 and 16 Aviation fuel storage, 17 Crater of exploded magazine, 18 Bomb magazine; fuel storage, 19 Garage, 20 Coast defense guns, 21 Range finder for coast defense, 22 Blockhouse, 23 Ice storage, 24 Searchlight and coast defense, 25 Water reservoir and generator, 26 Truck parking area, 27 Magazine, 28 Radar, 29 Generator building, 30 12.7-centimeter gun emplacement, 31 Earth-covered ammunition storage, 32 Coast defense gun, 33 Cemetery, 34 Gasoline dump, 35 Causeway to Reuter, 36 Diesel locomotive, 37 Gasoline storage, 38 Boat yard, 39 Tanks, 40 Garage, 41 Southernmost concrete pier; site of former garage, 42 Boat repair, 43 Wrecked ship, 44 Power plant, 45 Boat yard, 46 Air operations building, 47 Concrete dock, 48 Blockhouse, 49 Small boat maintenance, 50 Wood dock, 51 Boat yard, 52 Refrigeration plant; blockhouse, 53 Radio station, 54 South hangar, 55 North hangar, 56 Oil tanks, 57 Coast defense gun, 58 3 twin-25-millimeter antiaircraft, 59 Torpedo magazine (destroyed), 60 and 61 Destroyed torpedo magazine, 62 Aircraft parts warehouse, 63 Garage, 64 Hospital, 65 Shelter, 66 Admiral's command post, 67 Garage maintenance.

Not knowing of my plans, no arrangements had been made for my accommodation. On my previous trip, I'd stayed at the two-room schoolhouse, but now school was in session, so that was out. The other alternative — over the co-operative store at the end of the wartime pier extending into the lagoon — was also not possible, since the space was now occupied by the new Peace Corps volunteer, James Toledano from Chicago, Illinois, who was also on hand to greet the Dornier this morning. But fortunately for me, a cottage had been built since my previous trip by the Island Council for the recently-assigned United Nations Volunteer in charge of a UNDP integrated development project for Maloelap, and I was now offered accommodation in the extra room by the Filipino Volunteer, Ruben Rinon. Although the Island Council was equally uninformed of my visit, it was accepted that if Mayor Lomes McKay and Deputy Mayor Enos Tibnol had known of my return trip, they would have arranged for me to stay in the cottage.

And what a charming cottage it was! It was built island-style, with thatched roof and swing-out thatch windows. There was a separate cookhouse, toilet, and bucket-style bathhouse, plus a well from which to draw water. The whole complex was located on a concrete slab, part of the service apron adjoining the now-collapsed wartime hangars. Ruben would prove to be an excellent host, as well as a good cook, combining my imported store goods with his local items into Filipino-style meals.

Ruben, Jim, and another Peace Corps volunteer on a visit from Maloelap's Airok Island, Emily Wen, were excited to hear of the purpose of my trip. They were curious to know of the wartime history of Taroa and the identity of the numerous concrete structures all over the tiny island, and here I was, equipped with the US Strategic Bombing Survey report on Maloelap and wartime photos of Taroa from the air and of military structures in place in 1945! Especially the photos animated them — they couldn't believe that the heavily-foliaged island they knew was a virtual sand desert in 1945 after almost two years of incessant bombing, as confirmed by the USSBS photos.

Since Emily was due to leave the next day for Airok, we all decided to do an afternoon reconnaissance of the nearby lagoon side of Taroa to identify structures, using the USSBS report as a guide. First we visited the two huge concrete-encased fuel storage tanks (see Point 56 of map), their innards exposed as a result of a shell that had blown open the back end of the tanks. Walking south down the lagoon fringe, we identifed the two concrete buildings in front of the wartime radio station as a blockhouse and the refrigeration plant (Point 52). Next we walked over to a huge building off the side of the path, which I could now confirm as the power plant (Point 44). Further down the island, Jim led us to an area of underground rooms, their roof blasted in several places — barracks? (Unfortunately, this structure was not identified on the USSBS map). Now we swung back to the north, walking parallel to the disused lower part of the old NE-SW strip, now covered with foliage, to reach the airfield reception area. Here we saw the unusual thick-walled, one-storey building which could now be identified as the air operations building (Point 46), at present serving as the home of two local families. It was now getting dark, so we all returned to the cottage for a lively discussion on Taroa, then and now.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

After breakfast, Jim Toledano and I walked over to the air operations building again, where I took photos to compare with the 1945 USSBS views. With Jim serving as interpreter, we talked to Eobi John, whose family of five shares the structure today with Ina Lemae's family of 11! Eobi remembered climbing on the two wartime hangars near the building as a child, but in the 1970s the rusted structures collapsed — no trace of them today. Her grandparents had taken over the heavy concrete building immediately after the war and moved into it in the early 1970s when Taroa was reinhabited by its former residents — until then, they only visited their island from the nearby islands to harvest their coconuts, fearing to live there because of the large amount of unexploded ordnance strewing the island at the time.

The Japanese had seized any land they wanted on Taroa for their construction programme without compensation to the traditional landowners. All the inhabitants except workers were moved off Taroa to the other islands of Maloelap, followed by the workers too after American bombing of Taroa started in November 1943. After the war, the landowners inherited any structures the Japanese had built on their land.

Jim and I then visited the wartime radio station, a three-storey structure, the highest on Taroa (Point 53). I had thoroughly explored the heavily-damaged building during my first visit to Taroa and now could compare its features with those of 1945, thanks to the USSBS photos. There are three gaping holes through the roof, with iron reinforcing bars protruding at all angles. Descending the rusting iron stairway to the second floor, held up by concrete pillars only, with no walls, we looked across the one very long room, extending the whole length

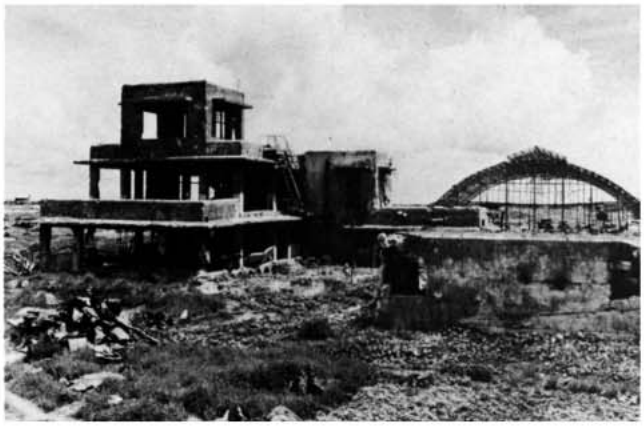
This massive pair of concrete-encased steel oil storage tanks (Point 56) still remain amid mature coconut palms.

of the building. At one end, a bomb explosion had left a huge hole in the floor. This level today is the center of social activity on Taroa for its 160 inhabitants, serving on Sunday as a church! Proceeding down the concrete steps, we entered the ground floor, divided into three rooms plus an open front area. One wall was knocked down and a large slab of concrete was hanging down precariously.

From the little room on top of the roof, Jim and I had admired the view of the blue-green lagoon, which extends 32 miles from the island of Airok south of Taroa to the island of Kaven at the north-west extremity of the atoll. We had a good perspective of the concrete main pier, L-shaped during the war but now with its extremity missing, destroyed when demolition workers exploded wartime bombs near it in the early 1960s, according to the local inhabitants (Point 47).

Back at the cottage for lunch, Jim and I agreed to set out again in the afternoon, but a rain squall forced postponement of departure till 4.00 p.m. This time we headed east across the airstrip to the ocean side of Taroa to visit the blockhouse (Point 22) which had so impressed me during my 1984 trip. But the tide was coming in, making it difficult to walk along the rocky shore. Finally we reached the round, concrete structure, some 10 feet high with 3-foot thick walls. The blockhouse had four firing ports facing to the ocean, but no guns were in evidence. I was keen to take a photo of the rear of the structure to match the 1945 USSBS view of the same blockhouse, but since my previous visit an incredible amount of thick foliage had sprung up due to heavy rains on the island in the intervening period, which completely obscured the rear of the blockhouse. Jim chopped at the growth with his machete, but it was too much. I decided to shoot a

This 150mm coastal defence gun (Point 57) stands sentinel at the north-western extremity of the island, looking out over the lagoon beach.



Today trees and heavy foliage obscure the view of the three-storey radio station (Point 53) which in 1945 stood out against the stark landscape. The framework of the shattered south hangar has since disappeared.

On the north-eastern corner, facing outwards towards the ocean lay this four-gun heavy battery (Point 9), knocked out by Marine Corps dive-bombers in June 1944.

frontal view but the tide was too far in now, frustrating that attempt too.

Giving up, we headed back to the cottage and again passed by the unidentified underground rooms of the day before. This time we carefully examined the area, above and inside the rooms. There was about one inch of earth on the roof, which was of concrete about eight inches thick. There were twin rooms of about 110 feet in length and 55 feet in width, each with 9 concrete pillars extending the length of the room supporting the 8-foot high ceiling. I noted five places in the ceiling that were caved in from bomb hits. The landowner had informed Jim that when he reoccupied his land in the 1960s, he found beds in the rooms.

Was this the island headquarters? A November 1943 JICPOA bulletin on Maloelap refers to such an underground structure in the approximate location of these large mystery rooms. Strangely, the USSBS survey does not include this graphic example of successful bombing in its report.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

Since neither Tartious nor Jim were available to join me on this morning's outing, I set out alone to explore the upper south-west and the north-west lagoon beach area of Taroa for the first time.

Walking north along the sandy beach in brilliant sunshine, I could make out a gun on the north-western tip of the island, just beyond the location of the turning circle of the now-overgrown NW-SE airstrip. As I approached, I could identify it as a 150mm coastal defense gun (Point 57). I climbed up the mount and inspected the gun, intact but rusting away in many places. A Japanese inscription was still readable on the top of the breech end.

Preparing to walk up the beach leading to the north point of Taroa, I noticed a machine gun at the edge of the jungle bordering the beach, set up by the Japanese to oppose any landing at the north-west point. Closer inspection showed it to be a rusting, single mount 20mm gun, foliage covering one side of it. And then I observed another gun in a burned-out clearing some 75 feet behind the first gun. This one proved to be of the same type.

Returning to the beach, I began walking toward the north point, visible at a distance. Not a soul was to be seen as I made my way over coral boulders on the gleaming white sand beach, the sound of the surf pounding on the distant reef ahead of me adding to the pleasing experience. A cool breeze blowing in from the sea mitigated the effect of the midday sun beating down on me. However by 11.45 a.m. I was only half-way to the north point so I decided to terminate my morning outing here to avoid being out in the midday heat too long.

After lunch at the cottage, I had some unexpected visitors. Ina Lemae had brought the two oldest male inhabitants of the island to see me and to look over my wartime photos of Taroa. Captal Manaki I had interviewed during my 1984 visit, but this was the first time I had met Romolok Kaious. Both in their sixties, they had worked for the Japanese in 1941-43 in construction activities on the island, having been recruited from Kaven island at the other end of Maloelap Atoll. When the bombing commenced in late 1943, the Japanese had sent them off to nearby Ollot Island, then back to Kaven.

At 4.00 p.m., Jim and Tartious showed up, equipped with machetes for cutting through bush when we reached our destination — anti-aircraft and coastal defense guns just to the east of north point and the island command post in the north-east quadrant of the island.

After walking north-east down the 3,000 feet of the NE-SW strip in operation again, we reached the turning circle, where we turned left to proceed along the beach. It was low tide now and the walking was not difficult, though we had to navigate over the coral boulders.

Then I spotted just inland the broken barrel tip of one of the 150mm coastal defense guns, which identified the gun as the same one in my 1945 USSBS photo! (Point 9). But reaching the gun, covered in thick foliage except for the tip of its protruding barrel, proved difficult as the bush was waist-high all around it. Tartious and Jim hacked a path to it from the direction required for a comparison photo, then cleared away bush on the barrel, which proved to be heavily rusted. Then we looked for the other gun pictured with the broken tip gun in another USSBS photo. We spotted its barrel a short distance further to the west and hacked our way to it but it proved impossible to get both guns in the same photo — the foliage between the two was too thick. Some 150 feet further up the coast, Tartious found the third 150mm gun of the four-gun battery, all of which had been knocked out by Marine Corps dive-bombers in June 1944. This one

We have commented in earlier issues on the problems of taking comparison pictures in the tropical zones where nature soon reclaims the land. At first only the barrel of the No. 1 gun *(above)* could be seen — No. 4 gun *(below)* had to be cut from the rampant undergrowth before a photograph was possible.

was lying in particularly thick bush and tree branches, and would have necessitated great effort with the machetes to reach. We decided to skip it.

Retracing our steps, we reached the turning circle again and headed back down the strip, then turned off to the left at the point where Tartious identified the path leading through the jungle to what he now believed was the island command post, based on his reaction to the USSBS photo I had of the twin-domed concrete structure. Tartious and Jim slashed away at the foliage of the largely overgrown path until we reached a little coconut grove about 300 feet from where we turned off the strip. Just beyond, I could make out two large humps of growth, higher than the surrounding area. Cutting back the thick brush of the closer hump, we found a concrete dome-like structure underneath, with an entrance leading down some steps into the darkness. Then Tartious cleared part of the foliage of the other hump some 20 feet away sufficiently to allow us to make out another concrete dome with a similar entrance.

Tartious had discovered this structure years earlier, which was of great interest to him because of the abundance of large coconut crabs to be found in the depths of each dome, connected to one another by a tunnel. He did not know at the time what the purpose of the structure was, but it now appeared it did match the 1945 photo of the command post (Point 10), though we would need to come back and clear further to be sure.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31

Returning to the north-west lagoon beach in the morning, I soon encountered a big concrete pillbox at the water's edge shortly beyond the point where I had left off the day before. Entering the back end, I explored the single room structure and peered out to the water from an opening in the front. Disturbed by the unexpected visitor, crabs scurried around on the floor to escape my presence.

Close to the pillbox and in shallow water were lying two broken concrete tetrahedrons, evidently intended to thwart any American landings on this beach area. Sections of rusted iron protruded from the blocks.

Some 60 feet further up the beach, I reached the tip of the north point of the island, where I inspected another concrete pillbox, this one a two-storey structure lying up on the sand at a crazy angle. Upon entering from the rear, I found that it consisted of two small chambers, about 4½ feet high, with the one on the left, full of coral rock and sand, having an iron three-step rail leading to a topside opening and the second with an opening to the outside. It seemed not to have suffered any damage in the war.

Navigating my way in my sandals forty feet further over a beach strewn with erosion-smoothed coral rocks, I ran across an unexpected find: the half-buried breech and lower end of a heavily rusted 150mm coastal gun, facing in the opposite direction to its original position. I surmised that it must have been the victim of a direct bomb or shell hit, which blew it from its original emplacement onto the beach.

Then, I noticed some huge concrete blocks and a big gnarled tree on the beach about 100 feet behind the coastal defense gun. Curious, I inspected the area just above the blocks where the beach meets the jungle and found what looked like the circular emplacement for one of the 127mm dual-purpose guns, completely overgrown although there was no gun in the big, foliage-covered depression. (Checking later with my USSBS report, I figured that this must have been the number two emplacement of the three gun battery at Point 3; emplacements number one and three housed 127mm guns, while number two was used to mount light machine guns only).

Returning to the beach and walking eastward, I now found yet another pillbox, similar to the preceding one in having two chambers. Entering from the rear, I found the only damage to it to be the broken concrete floor.

Then a little further down the ocean beach, I came upon another blockhouse (Point 7), the second of the three located on the ocean side as indicated on the USSBS map. Half-buried in the sand in front of the blockhouse I noticed a live naval shell, most likely fired at the blockhouse from a US Navy warship.

Now I spotted the broken barrel of the 150mm coastal defense gun ahead of me — I had reached the point of the coastal guns explored with Jim and Tartious the day before.

Left: **The wartime rear view of the concrete blockhouse on the ocean beach at Point 22 is contrasted by this shot** *(right)* **of a similar blockhouse at Point 7 viewed by the author from the front in 1986.**

The tide was way out this morning — one could venture almost all the way out to the ocean reef. I walked only about 100 feet out on the jagged coral to take a distant shot of the blockhouse, then proceeded up the tidal area along the beach edge, looking for any other remnants of the Pacific War. It was very windy and overcast, a relief from the searing sun. One rusted, small, unidentifiable iron object after another met my view, strewn all over the rough black coral area.

Passing by the empty gun emplacement on the return walk, I was puzzled by the fact that it is located right on the edge of the beach, rather than 75 yards inland as indicated in the USSBS study, but apparently the whole beach area has been heavily eroded in the past 40 years. This would explain why the three pillboxes were sitting out so close to the water's edge and why several huge, dead, and weathered trees are lying on their sides on the beach in this area.

That afternoon, it rained until 5.00 p.m., when I ventured out to take some photos of the powerplant (Point 44), but it was impossible to get any shot to compare with the 1945 USSBS view of the two-storey building, since a big six-chamber water catchment structure blocked any positioning on my part. How did the USSBS photographer get the view? And my intention to explore inside was deterred by Jim, who happened to pass by at the time and informed me that the interior was being used by all the local people as a toilet!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1

Tartious and Jim came by the cottage this morning, but since it was raining, they decided it was no use checking out war remains today — they would go fishing instead. If it were not raining on their return in the early afternoon, they would come with me to the site of the 127mm guns on the oceanside that Tartious had showed me in 1984 (Point 13).

I spent the morning talking to Ruben instead about the development of the area around the cottage. By chance, the Island Council had built the cottage over the service apron of the airfield, as the clearing of surface soil had revealed. The concrete apron thus provided a solid foundation for the cottage. It was also sited right on the edge of the apron, below which the Japanese had built a drain to carry away rain water; thus the cottage had no drainage problem. But clearing the area of foliage had proved more difficult. One day when Ruben was burning off foliage in a nearby pit formed by a bomb explosion, the landowner warned him against such activity and fled the site — he was afraid that there was live ordnance in the crater that would 'cook off' in the fire. Indeed, when Ruben later dug into the pit, he found four live rounds!

At 1.00 p.m., the rain having let up, I decided to walk down the lagoon beach to the point opposite the sunken Japanese freighter *Toroshima Maru*, which lies some 500 feet out in the lagoon. I wanted to take a photo from the point on shore where the USSBS photographer had placed himself for his own shot of the ship (Point 43), which was sunk in January 1944 by bombers of the 7th Air Force.

Walking south down the soft sandy beach, I soon picked up an entourage of Marshallese children, curious as to what I was up to with my collection of cameras. After I reached the location of the freighter, I headed inland over the scrub to a point near a bomb crater that allowed me to line up the two masts of the ship in a position that matched that of the 1945 photo and at about the same distance from shore. In 1945, the whole superstructure of the *Toroshima Maru* was above water, but now only two masts stick up to mark the freighter's location — evidently in the 1970s a demolition crew from Majuro had exploded live bombs in its bow, finishing off the job of the American

This odd structure (Point 10), of great interest to the islanders because of the abundance of coconut crabs inside, proved of equal interest to Bill when he identified it from the US Strategic Bombing Survey as the Japanese command post.

aircraft but removing from view one of the more interesting war relics of Taroa.

With no sign of Tartious and Jim in early afternoon — they had evidently had a late start on their fishing expedition to the adjoining islands to the north — I decided to set out myself to try to relocate the 127mm guns that Tartious had shown me during our 1984 walk up the ocean beach.

Walking along the narrow path just beyond the radio station that should lead to the airfield reception area, I was soon surprised to come across the ruins of a Betty bomber. There was only the fuselage and tail section left, lying upside down in a burned-out area. Investigating the debris, I found a little identification plate on a piece of the tail, with the number 6540. I figured that this must have been the serial number of the ill-fated bomber.

Just 50 feet ahead of the Betty was the concrete revetment for three Zeros that Tartious had shown me in 1984. It was even more overgrown with brush than earlier, but I could still make out the propeller of a Zero sticking up from the growth in the middle revetment. I would check it out again on my return from the ocean beach.

Further along the path, I now ran into the remains of another Betty in an area where it looked like the local people had been burning coconut husks. Only the tail and rear fuselage remained. I spotted the identification rectangular marking area on the lower rear fuselage — it was Betty serial number 6100. Then I recalled finding this Betty with Tartious in 1984, but we had come from a different direction, which had disoriented me this time. At that time, the area was also heavily covered with bush, now burned off.

I was still trying to reach the airfield to cross over to the ocean side for the 127mm guns but, after walking a short distance on the path beyond the Betty, I found I couldn't continue much further as the path just faded into chest-high foliage. I could hear the ocean pounding on the reef ahead of me, but how to reach it? I somehow had taken the wrong path — this one didn't lead to the airfield after all!

Giving up, I retraced my steps to head back to the revetment, which I would check out thoroughly this time.

First, I took some measurements. The concrete walls, pock-marked with bullet strikes, evidently from strafing aircraft, were 12 feet high and 2 feet thick. Each revetment was 50 feet wide and extended back 50 feet. Standing on top of the long front wall, I tried to identify the easiest means by which to get into one of the three revetments from behind to give me access to any Zeros hidden under the brush. The far right revetment seemed to offer the best opportunity.

Flailing away with my machete, I cut deeply into the soft bushes and foliage at the back of the revetment to give me an opening, then into the chest-high vegetation in the revetment itself, working myself gradually forward into the square area. After about 15 minutes effort, I hit a metal object — a plane! Continuing to slash away, I now could make out a wing of faded pink aluminium and proceeded to clear the foliage on it completely away. It was upside down, resting at an angle, the tip facing me, the main section resting on a piece of the revetment up front. But what plane was it? I measured the width of the wing — 150 centimeters. If it was a Zero, where was the cannon? Slashing away, I slowly moved up the forward edge of the wing — then spotted a small open panel on the wing, inside of which I could see a 20mm cannon! And then, clearing the leading edge opposite this point, there was a long barrel, rusted but intact, protruding from the wing. So it was an A6M3, Model 22A Zero, identifiable by its long 20mm cannon.

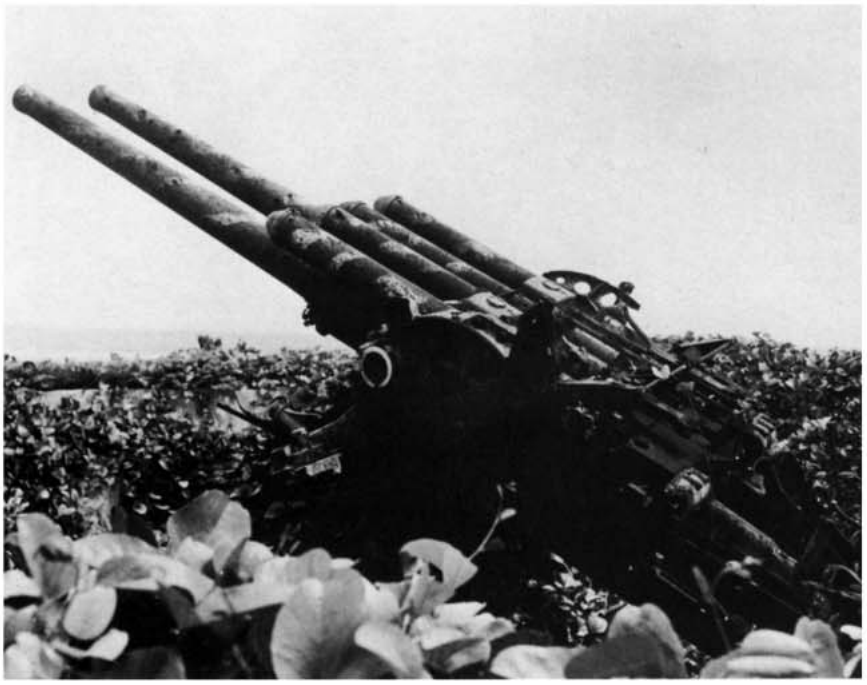
Next to the wing rested another wing, but after cutting away at the foliage for a few minutes, I decided to suspend the work. It was getting dark — better to return to the cottage.

Only the tail and rear fuselage remain of Betty 6100.

Walking back along the path, I noticed the air operations building some 50 feet to my left through the bush — and realised then that I'd taken the wrong path to reach the airfield. The correct path passes by the building, parallel to this one.

During my 1984 trip to Taroa, I had devoted most of my attention to searching for the Zeros I'd heard about years earlier as being on the island. Tartious had taken me to a veritable 'boneyard' of Zeros and Betty bombers behind the service apron area, near the disused NW-SE runway. I counted no less than seven Zero wrecks in different stages of disintegration lying within 150 feet of each other, plus sections of three Betties. The tail of one of the Zeros carried the marking Y2 — 176, the code of a Zero of the 252 Naval Air Group.

Bill Bartsch with the remains of an A6M2 Zero Y2-176 of the 252 Naval Air Group (see also centre pages).



A twin 127mm gun on the eastern section of the ocean beach (Point 13) in 1945, reported as having been knocked out by bombing on January 31, 1944.

Near the reception area of the airfield, I had also found an almost-intact Zero lying out in the open. No identifying code could be seen on the tail, but from the serial number on its fuselage it appeared to be either a Nakajima A6M2 Model 21 or a Mitsubishi A6M3 Model 22. Near the Zero wreck lay the engine and part of the wing of another Zero, this one an A6M3 Model 22A, its long-barreled 20mm cannon extending from the wing.

Tartious had told me about two other Zeros that had been taken off Taroa by Americans a few years earlier. These had been in good condition, collectors items of considerable value, unknown to the local population. One ended up on Saipan and was subsequently sold to a museum in Japan. The other had a sadder fate. After it reached Majuro for trans-shipment to the US, it became the subject of litigation between Taroa landowners as to ownership and today it still rests in the backyard of a Marshallese house on Majuro. After hearing these stories, I urged the local people not to allow any war remains to be removed from Taroa — they were part of the island's heritage and much safer where they lie!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2

Early this morning, Jim came by the cottage, equipped with a machete. Tartious had told us the evening before how to locate the 127mm gun emplacement on the ocean beach that I wanted to visit.

This time, I proceeded with Jim down the right path to the airfield reception area, then turned left to walk up the strip a short distance before turning off where Jim spotted the path leading to the ocean coast. We came out on the beach and walked a short distance, passing by the turning circle of the disused landing strip and the concrete seawall, built to protect the runway from the ocean surf. Some 60 feet into the turning circle lies the obscured ruin of another Betty, complete except for the rear fuselage and tail — Tartious and I had explored it during my previous visit.

We identified the coconut palm that Tartious mentioned as the marker behind which one of the 127mm gun emplacements was supposed to be located. Almost directly behind the palm we found an opening leading into the bush and decided to check it out to see if it would lead to one of the three emplacements that the USSBS report indicated should be in this area.

Sure enough, some 60 feet back into the undergrowth, we made out the circular concrete wall characteristic of the 127mm gun emplacements. But inside the emplacement, we could not find any gun — just very thick scrub. Later, we surmised that this must have been the number two emplacement that was used to position light machine guns, according to the USSBS report.

Coming back to the beach, we split up — I headed back into the bush about 15 feet further down from the coconut palm, while Jim went a further 20 feet down the beach. When I'd hacked myself about 20 feet into the bush, I heard Jim yell 'Bill' — he must have found it! In response, I went over to Jim's entry point and found that he had cut about 60 feet into the easier bush there. Sure enough, at the end, at the top of a low hill, were two big, rusted barrels sticking out in my direction from dense undergrowth — nothing else visible. I checked my USSBS photos — exactly the same elevation as the guns in the photos of gun emplacement number one.

Jim hacked his way up to the rim of the circular concrete wall and around to the right to allow us to assume the position of the USSBS photographer. Jim then jumped down into the emplacement and started chopping the branches of a thick tree that covered the lower part of the twin barrels. I jumped into the emplacement too and started poking around. To the left of the lower half of the gun was the two-piece breech, which apparently had been blasted off. (The USSBS survey indicated that the gun had been knocked out by several bombs and near misses on January 31, 1944.) In the meantime, Jim was up on top of the barrels and hacking off branches of the tree from his precarious position. The gun was completely rusted.

After I'd taken sufficient photos, Jim and I headed back down the path that he had hacked to the beach. What a relief from the stifling heat to have the strong breeze blowing off the ocean hit us full force!

We walked back to the airstrip, then turned up the field to look for the path leading to the island command post that Tartious had showed us three days earlier. After a false start, we found the right path and walked some 300 feet to the area of the two domes. I measured the outer concrete block protecting the entrance of the dome to the right: 26 inches thick.

We then started chopping away the heavy foliage over the two domes and in front of the structure to allow for a photo to compare with that the USSBS photographer had taken 41 years earlier, but the intensity of the midday sun obliged us to rest in the shade every few minutes. After a half-hour's heavy work, the area was sufficiently cleared to confirm that this was indeed the island command post — the two domes and connector matched those of the 1945 photo. Pleased with the discovery but hot and tired, we trudged back down the airfield to return to the cottage.

That afternoon I rested until 4.45 p.m., when Tartious showed up for a late afternoon walk to the site of the aircraft revetment, which lies on his land. After walking to the site with me, Tartious jumped down into the middle revetment and proceeded to clear the foliage where the tip of a propeller was sticking up — but only the engine of the Zero was revealed after the brush was cleared away.

Moving on to the burned-out coconut husk

An incredible find 41 years later. Bill was able to grab this picture before Mother Nature finally swallows up the rusting barrels.

Maloelap certainly lives up to the reputation the Pacific islands have for uncleared aircraft wreckage. *Left:* **Tartious Zackious with G4M1 Betty 6049 in the jungle of Taroa.** *Right:* **The remains of an A6M3 Model 22A Zero on nearby Ollot Island.**

area, I asked Tartious to climb up on the massive tail of Betty No. 6100 to see if he could make out any numbers behind the tangled foliage obscuring the side of the tail. He could: 053, which indicated that this was aircraft number 53 in the particular Naval Air Group — most likely the 752 Group, the Betty unit stationed in the area at the end of 1943.

Then Tartious took me over to the site of two more Bettys that I had visited in 1984. In a crater some 30 feet in diameter, the wing of one Betty was standing up dramatically, encircled by coconut palms and pandanus trees. Nearby, in another crater, lay the upside-down wing of another Betty, its extended landing gear sticking up. And almost next to it, the upside-down rear fuselage and tail section of a third Betty, and finally a fourth Betty, its engine mangled, wings protruding skyward, apparently the victim of a hit in mid-fuselage. Mosquitoes were in abundance in this area and were now proving a problem for us.

On the way back, Tartious guided me to another revetment which was open in the rear, but an inspection revealed only the scattered remains of a single aircraft.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3

Tartious was tied up this morning, helping to load the copra boat which had just come in, so I set out alone shortly after nine to explore the beach from the end of the runway to around the lagoon side.

Walking up the runway, I noticed a coastal defense gun to the left, 100 feet back of the edge of the runway, in light bush. Closer inspection revealed that it was indeed another of the 150mm guns, eight of which were deployed on Taroa during the war, according to the USSBS survey. But what was this one doing away from the coast? (I later found out from Tartious that a demolition crew from Majuro had moved it there years ago from its original position).

Turning left at the end of the runway, I passed by the remains of structures I had checked out three days earlier; but some 20 feet beyond the blockhouse (Point 7) and the live naval shell, I spotted *another* live shell, a big one. It was difficult to measure, as it was lying half-buried in the sand, but it seemed to be about 7½ inches in diameter and 31 inches long. Evidently it was fired from a US naval warship to knock out the blockhouse, but had failed to explode.

Back at the cottage again, at 2.00 p.m. I had a visit from the Mayor of Maloelap, Lomes McKay, who had come over from the island of Ollot and had just found out I was on Taroa. He was sorry that he had known nothing of my visit until a few days before, and about not meeting me as in 1984. For any future trip, I was advised to let Lomes know directly, via the Department of Outer Island Affairs on Majuro, which maintains a radio link with Maloelap.

On my previous trip to Maloelap, I had visited Ollot as the guest of Enos Tibnol, the Deputy Mayor of Maloelap, who lives on the island. Tartious had told me there were wrecks of three Zeros on Ollot, but a reconnaissance of the island showed that only one was in large enough pieces to be of interest. On the beach near where we came in with the island boat were lying the wings and engine of a type A6M3 Model 22A, its cannon protruding from the wings. This was evidently one of the three Zeros that had run out of gas during the January 29, 1944 dogfight and crash-landed on Ollot. Now after over 40 years at the water's edge, the remains are of a strange purplish hue.

Following the visit of the Mayor, Tartious showed up, his copra loading responsibilities finished. At 3.30 p.m. we set out to look for the 127mm gun at Point 3 on the USSBS map. In the USSBS photo of the gun, I'd noticed a pillbox in the background near the beach — and realised that it was the same one I'd investigated earlier at Point 1. I'd hoped by using the pillbox as a sighting point we would be able to locate the 127mm gun in the dense undergrowth by lining it up with the pillbox in the photo.

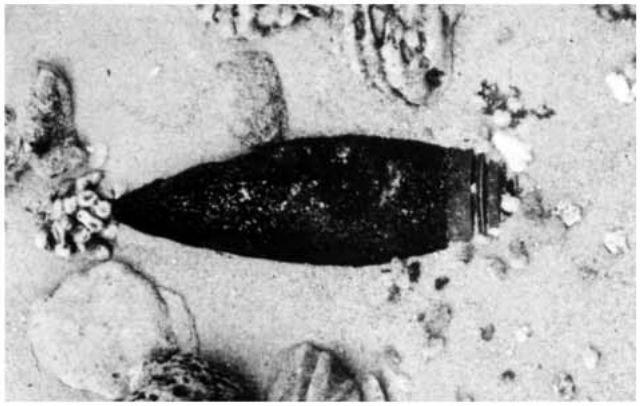
Arriving at the pillbox, we continued to walk along the beach, then cut up to the edge of the jungle at the indicated angle. Just

Only one-third of the Japanese Maloelap garrison survived the ravages of bombing, starvation and disease. The aircrews were evacuated by flying boat to Truk on February 5, 1944 following the devastating American air raids on January 29. Bill tracked down one of the former aces of the 252 Naval Air Group, Ensign Isamu Miyazaki, photographed with his squadron mate Yasuho Matsumoto on Taroa in October 1943. Matsumoto died in 1981 — Miyazaki is pictured with his wife Katsuyo outside a Buddhist temple in Japan.

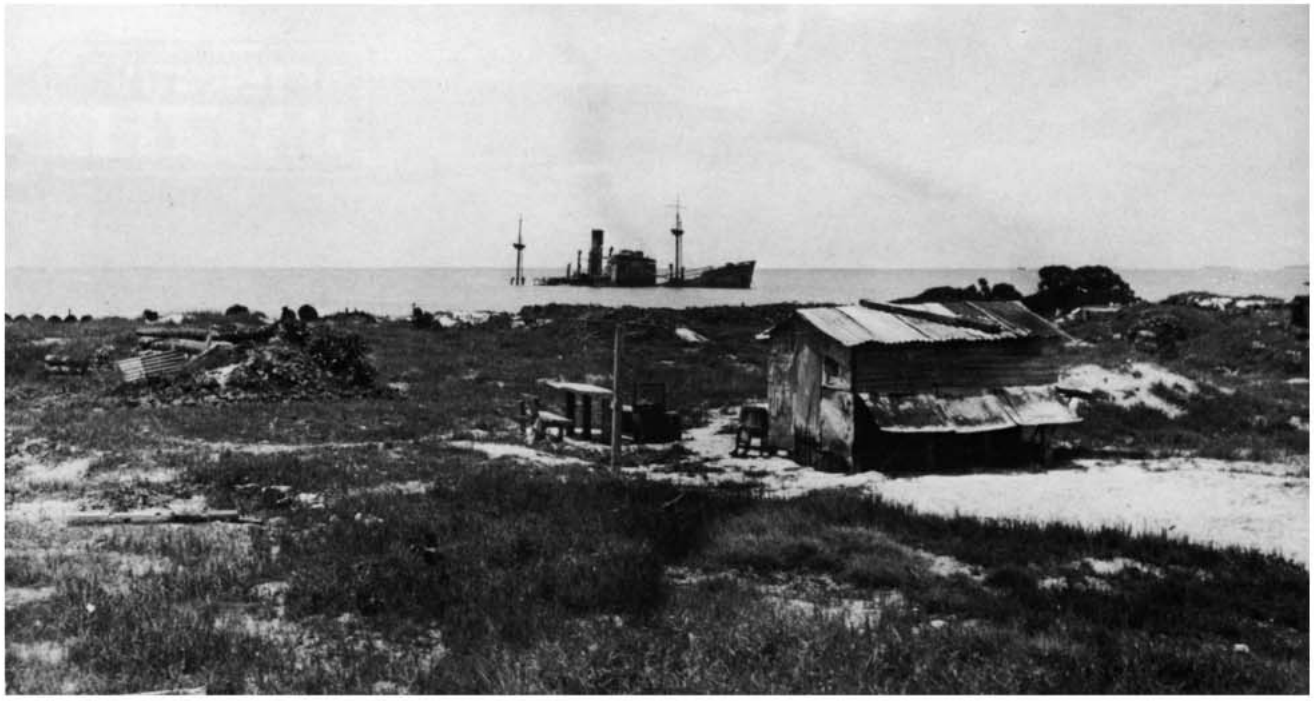
This dual-purpose 127mm with its twin barrels was pictured at Point 3 in 1945. Bill was particularly pleased to discover the gun still virtually intact after cutting a path through 30 feet of dense undergrowth.

some 30 feet into the thick brush we found the gun! The emplacement area was heavily overgrown, and a tree was embracing the rusted barrels of the twin 127mm piece. Tartious set to work attacking the tree and brush with his machete to afford me a view for a comparison photo. We had clearly found the number one gun emplacement of the three-emplacement battery — according to the USSBS report, it had been knocked out by Marine dive-bombers on June 18, 1944.

After clearing the brush entangling the gun, Tartious proceeded to clear the foliage in the emplacement area. Much to our surprise, he uncovered a huge rusted bomb which measured 14 inches in width and 42 inches in length — a 500 pounder? Then just to the right of the bomb I noticed a rectangular-shaped bottle under the bush. Pulling it out, I looked for some form of identification — was it Japanese? Sure enough, on the bottom, I found inscribed 'Suntory Ltd' across each end. I knew that brand as a fine Japanese whisky, but I wondered if during wartime the company produced sakè instead. Joking with Tartious,



Artillery shells on the beach and unexploded bombs in the undergrowth . . . some of the hazards of everyday life in a tropical paradise.



Hit by the 7th Air Force bombers in January 1944, and blown apart by a demolition team in the 1970s, the *Toroshima Maru* remains one of the most striking relics to be seen today on Maloelap — just an unknown remote atoll . . . one of the many forgotten outposts of the Pacific war.

I conjectured that when that huge bomb landed in the emplacement and failed to detonate, the Japanese crew of the 127mm gun were so relieved that they released their nervous tensions by finishing off the bottle of sake! Practicing what I had been preaching about war remains, I carefully put the historic bottle back in its original position of 42 years.

After taking several shots of the gun, emplacement, bomb, and bottle, I returned to the beach with Tartious and continued eastward down the ocean side. Some 50 feet from the site of the gun, we saw the broken concrete blocks marking the site of the emplacement I had checked out three days earlier.

By 6.00 p.m. we were back at the cottage. This was my last day for exploring Taroa. I was particularly pleased to have found the 127mm gun at Point 3 — the last interesting war relic on Taroa that had eluded me so far.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4

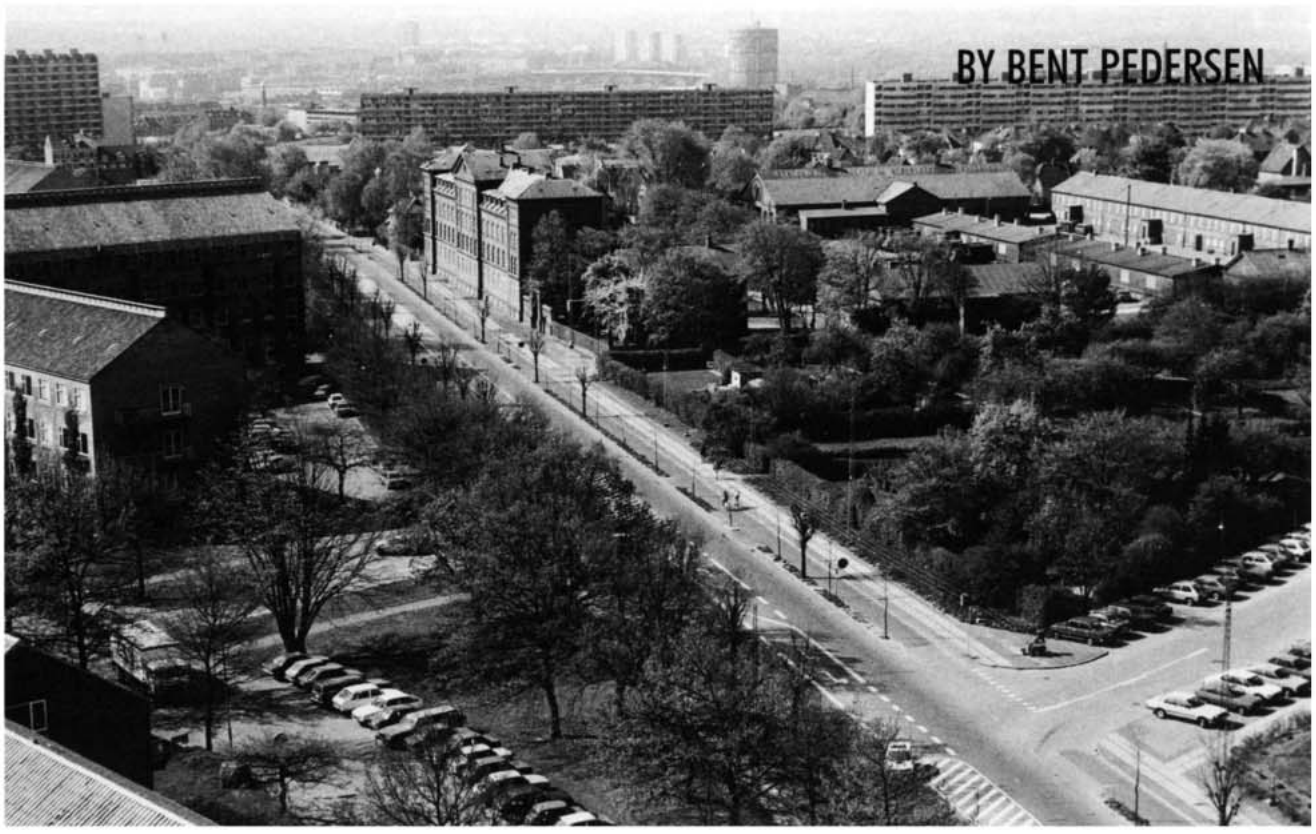
Rising early, I hurried to pack all my gear in the darkness for the return trip to Majuro. Ruben would be taking the flight too, so he had the extra responsibility to close up the cottage.

Down at the airfield reception area, Lomes McKay and Enos Tibnol were waiting for the arrival of the Dornier too, the main social event of the week on Taroa. Enos greeted me warmly — he like Lomes regretted not knowing that I had come back to Taroa. At 9.30 a.m., with a loud noise the Dornier hit the field and roared up the bumpy strip. Suzie Kaious — the wife of Taroa's policeman — rushed up to me and put a lei around my head and gave me a little memento of Taroa, followed by Enos with a locally-woven mat as a present. With warm goodbyes, Ruben and I joined the other four passengers for the flight to Majuro and climbed into the aircraft, again piloted by Helbert.

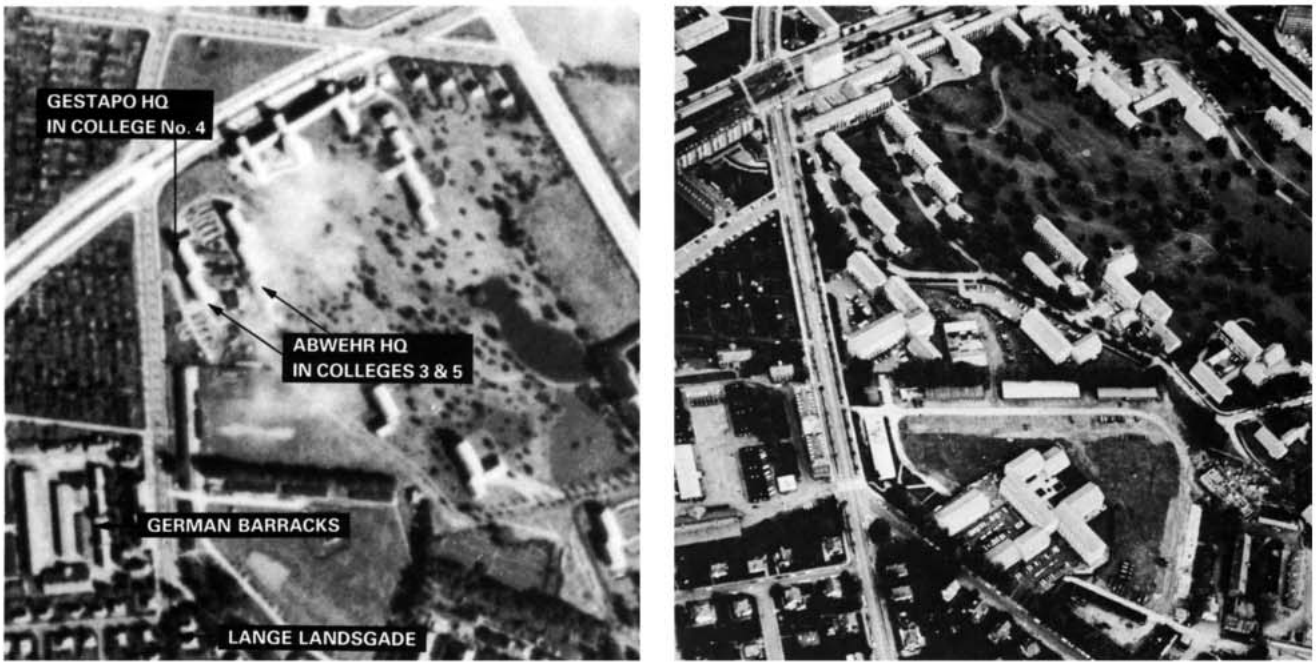
It was with some sadness that I watched Taroa fade into the background — but perhaps I would be back for a third visit? Back on Majuro, the possibility was raised during a visit to the Alele Museum. The Marshalls had recently been made eligible for the National Historical Landmark programme of the US Government, and could I help prepare a project for Maloelap? You bet I could!

THE AARHUS ATTACK

BY BENT PEDERSEN



One of the most daring — and successful — low level Mosquito strikes of the war was the attack on the Gestapo headquarters in the University of Aarhus on the Jutland peninsula, a hundred miles west of Copenhagen. This remarkable frame from the cine film taken on the raid shows the aircraft streaking in from the south-west across the German barracks beside the Lange Landsgade. College building No. 4 used by the Gestapo (officially the Geheime Staatspolizei) is already in ruins. (IWM)



When the signal from the Danish Underground was received in London on October 15, 1944, imploring the immediate destruction of Colleges 4 and 5 where the Gestapo records were housed, fortunately No. 544 Squadron had already carried out a routine photo-reconnaissance of the Aarhus area just five days previously *(left)*. (Crown Copyright/Keele University). *Right:* The comparison dates from the 1970s.

Alongside the famous attack on Amiens Prison on February 18, 1944 (*see After the Battle No. 28*), the destruction of the Gestapo's Jutland headquarters at Aarhus in Denmark must rank as one of the most ambitious and daring examples of the RAF's quick response, low-level attack strategy in support of the Resistance movements operating in Europe during the Second World War.

Requisitioned on October 2, 1944, the Aarhus University complex housed in College No. 4 not only the Gestapo headquarters headed by Kriminalrat SS-Sturmbannführer Eugen Schwitzgebel but also the headquarters of the Geheimfeldpolizei (the secret field police) and the Sicherheitsdienst (the SD or security service) headed by SS-Obersturmführer Lonechun. The headquarters of Oberstleutnant Lutze, Chief of Abwehr Jutland, were located in Colleges Nos. 3 and 5. The main building housed the offices of the Deutsche Wochenschau, nominally the German weekly newsreel organisation but in reality a cover for the German informer system, headed by Oberleutnant Bluhme of the Abwehr.

As the Gestapo's counter-Resistance gathered speed, a considerable volume of paperwork, files and a comprehensive card index of suspects together with Resistance detainees awaiting interrogation had been built up. A large part of the Gestapo's Resistance information consisted of that pertaining to the railway sabotage organisation, considered vital to the Allied attempt to prevent German reinforcements and supplies from Norway being channelled into the campaign in Europe. By mid-October the German security forces had gathered enough information to begin crushing the Resistance network in Jutland. Their success was beginning to concern the Danes to such an extent that they implored the British to help in a signal sent to London on October 15:

> Underground in Jutland about to be torn up by Gestapo. It is more important to destroy archives and save our people than to save archives and have our people destroyed. I beg forcibly that colleges four and five be destroyed by air attack. They are the two most westerly buildings in the University block. Urgent.

Receipt of this message set the Air Ministry wheels in motion, resulting in Nos. 21, 464 (RAAF) and 487 (RNZAF) Squadrons of No. 140 Wing in No. 2 Group being detailed to mount an attack on the University on Tuesday, October 31. The force was to consist of twenty-four Mosquito aircraft drawn from all three squadrons together with a fighter escort of Mustangs of No. 316 Squadron from No. 12 Group. This combined unit was led by Wing Commander R. W. Reynolds of No. 464 (RAAF) Squadron.

The preliminary briefings were exacting affairs, involving the study of a scale model of the University and surrounding area. The strategy called for a low-level raid, the crews having to go down almost to wave-top height over the North Sea once they were within a hundred miles of the Danish coast to avoid radar detection. The complete route consisted of a round trip of over 1,200 miles, 700 of which lay over water. The formation would comprise four sections, each of six aircraft, and a Mosquito from the Film Production Unit. The bombs were to be carried in the fuselage only, to facilitate greater accuracy, being fitted with eleven-second fuses to eliminate the risk of the aircraft being damaged by the blast of its own bombs, but, at the same time, leaving as little time as was necessary between the attacks.

The attacking force of Mosquito VIs was as follows:

No. 464 (RAAF) SQUADRON

Wing Commander R. W. Reynolds Squadron Leader E. B. Sismore	HX920
Wing Commander A. W. Langton Flying Officer D. S. Bedford	NS994
Squadron Leader S. Clayton Flight Sergeant H. V. Morrison	NS943
Squadron Leader E. H. Dunkley Flying Officer L. C. Webb	NS896
Flight Lieutenant W. C. Henderson Warrant Officer R. J. Hawke	HR352
Flight Lieutenant W. M. Shrimpton Pilot Officer P. R. Lake	NS890
Flying Officer R. Johnston Flying Officer G. J. H. Turner	LR256
Flight Sergeant J. H. Mulligan Flight Sergeant W. Kinloch	HR185

In view of the urgency stressed in the message, the RAF gave the raid top priority and scheduled it for October 31. The crews had therefore just two weeks to prepare for the operation. This model (now in the Imperial War Museum, London) was constructed to familiarise the pilots with the target.

No. 487 (RNZAF) SQUADRON

Grp. Cptn. P. G. Wykeham-Barnes	NS840
Flying Officer E. R. G. Jones	
Wing Commander R. C. Porteous*	
Flight Lieutenant A. C. Dunn	
Wing Commander W. L. Thomas	PZ164
Flight Lieutenant P. R. Humphrey-Baker	
Squadron Leader F. H. Denton	PZ332
Flying Officer A. J. Coe	
Flight Lieutenant A. S. Anderson	NS981
Flying Officer J. W. Taylor	
Flight Lieutenant B. D. Hanafin	HR182
Flying Officer C. F. Redgrave	
Flight Lieutenant W. P. Kemp	PZ195
Flying Officer E. T. Heap	
Flight Lieutenant G. D. Thorpe	PZ330
Flying Officer N. Pountney	
Flight Sergeant S. Etherington	NT171
Flight Sergeant C. A. Rattray	

* Despite extensive research the serial number of this aircraft cannot be determined.

No. 21 SQUADRON

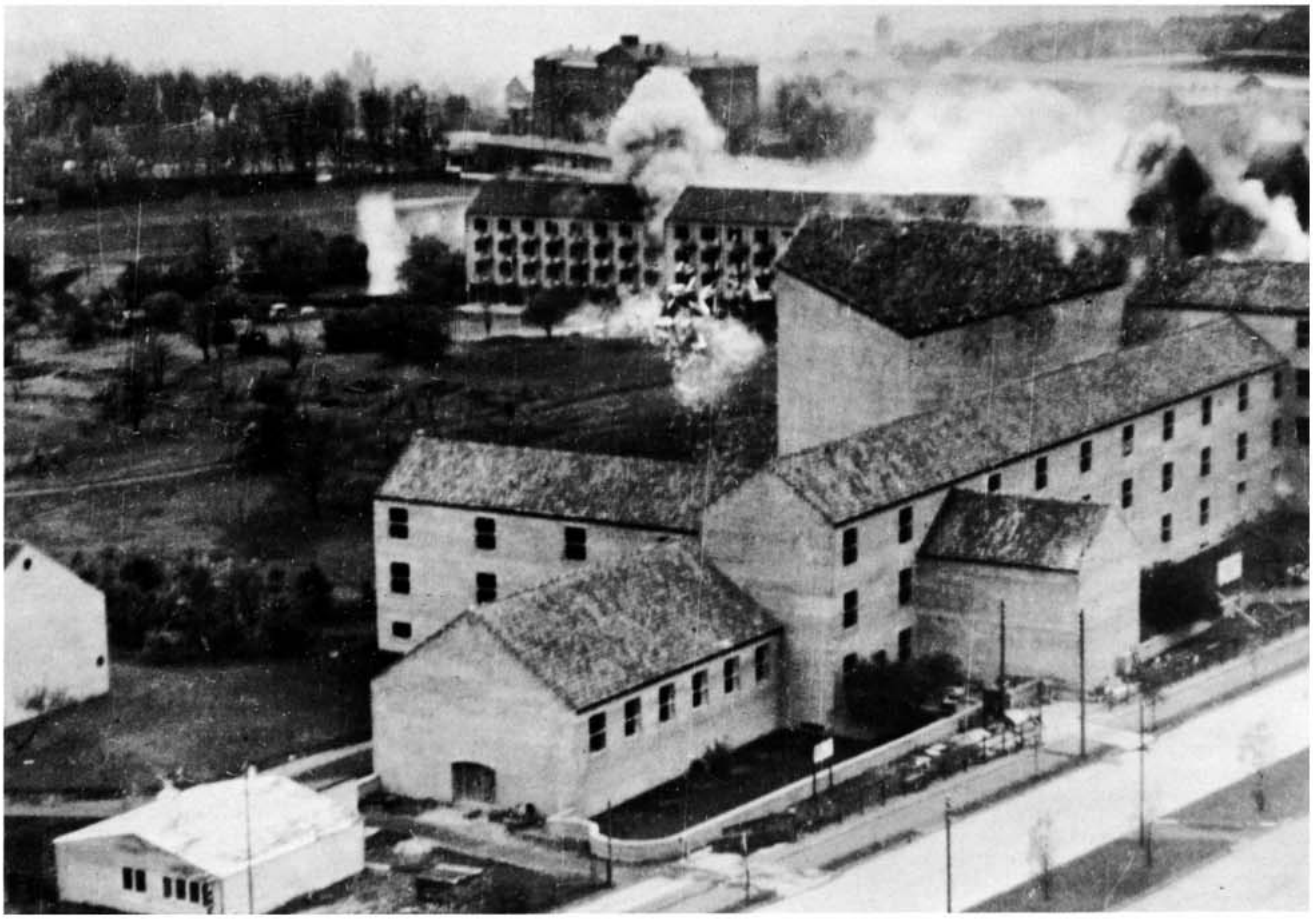
Wing Commander I. G. Dale	PZ314
Flying Officer K. A. Hackett	
Squadron Leader A. F. Carlisle	PZ306
Flying Officer N. Ingram	
Squadron Leader A. C. Henderson	NT200
Flight Lieutenant W. A. Moore	
Flight Lieutenant J. Martin	PZ304
Flight Sergeant H. Herman	
Flight Lieutenant D. C. McNeil	NT170
Flying Officer G. D. Leech	
Flying Officer I. Bellis	LR353
Flying Officer S. W. Moulds	
Pilot Officer J. H. Robertson	PZ316
Flight Sergeant E. F. Sewell	

Just after 7.00 a.m. the attacking force took off from Thorney Island on the south coast en route for Swanton Morley near East Dereham where the fuel tanks were topped up ready for the five-and-a-half-hour flight. As they reached the set point a hundred miles off the Danish coast, they went down to just above sea level, so low in fact that several pilots found it difficult to orientate themselves as seawater splashed over the canopies. Just before the target was reached, the crews experienced poor weather conditions, although this improved somewhat over Aarhus itself. At 11.40 a.m. the raid commenced, just four minutes after the alarm was raised by the Germans. While the Mosquitos carried out their bombing runs, the Mustangs of No. 316 Squadron strafed the ground defences, but little or no return fire was noted. Two aircraft from No. 487 Squadron were damaged by bomb blast: PZ164, piloted by Wing Commander Thomas, made a successful landing in Sweden, while NS840, flown by Group Captain Wykeham-Barnes, senior officer on the raid, returned unhurt to base. Squadron Leader Denton flew PZ332 so low on his run that he wiped off the port tailplane and tailwheel on a rooftop, also damaging the engine nacelle. His observer, Flying Officer Coe, helped him pull the stick back to maintain control.

On the ground the brick-built Colleges 4 and 5 had been totally destroyed whereas the rest of the buildings, being of concrete and brick construction, had only been damaged. In addition, a nearby German barracks opposite the University Park on Lange Landsgade had been severely damaged by six bombs causing numerous German casualties, a further two failing to explode. (In all seven bombs failed to go off.) Another bomb hit the offices where the architect responsible for constructing the whole complex, C. F. Moller, and several of his staff were working.

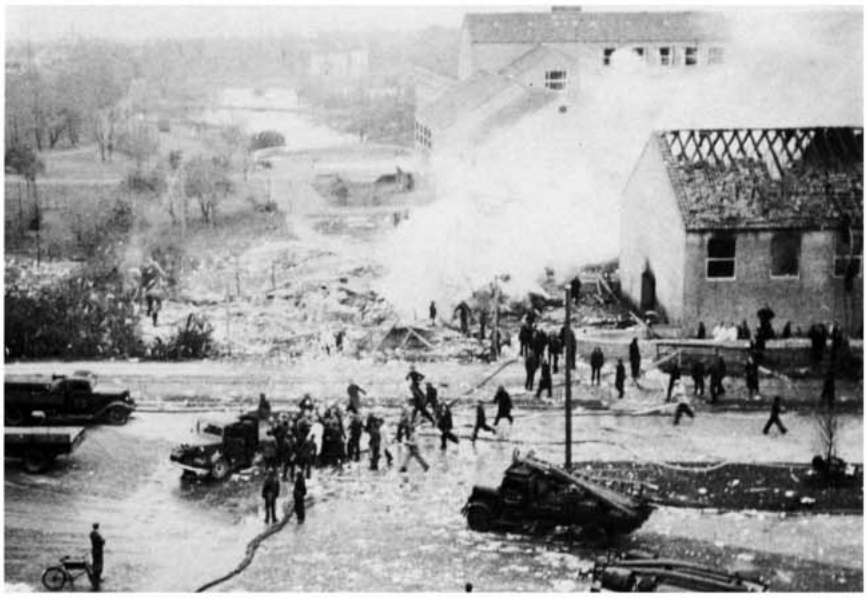
College No. 4 amid the smoke and dust. Bombs can actually be seen falling in this still from the Film Production Unit Mossie.

Left: **A set of fourteen original photographs (now at the RAF's Air Historical Branch in London), which had been taken on the ground during the attack, were analysed in June 1945 by Squadron Leader E. M. Salzer. This is the remains of College No. 4.** *Right:* **The campus was reconstructed and additional blocks were added post-war. On the left College No. 1; on the right the replacement for No. 4. All present day comparisons by Orla Jensen.**



(Now in his eighties, Mr Moller still works in the same building, having been pulled out alive from the wreckage in 1944.)

Above: **Another incredible action shot taken the precise moment that a bomb explodes on College No. 2. (IWM)** *Below:* **The comparison from almost exactly the same angle looks in the direction from which the aircraft came.**



Mr Moller's drawing office received a direct hit from a bomb which slid the length of the main building before its eleven-second fuze detonated. Here firemen battle to free him — he survived. (His wooden office can be seen in the lower left of the picture at the top of page 45, only seconds before it was demolished.)

A priest in Jutland since 1932, Pastor Harald Sandbaek's ordeal ended just as he was the mercy of his torturers — truly salvation from heaven.

Overall German casualties were estimated by RAF intelligence and the Danish Resistance at between 150 and 160. Amongst them was SS-Sturmbannführer Schwitzgebel of the Gestapo and SS-Obersturmführer Lonechun of the SD. The high number of Gestapo and Sicherheitsdienst casualties can be attributed to the fact that a large security services meeting was in progress at the time of the raid, the cars of some of the participants being visible in several of the Mosquito strike pictures taken during the operation.

During the attack, the precious files and index card system were destroyed, either by fire or by members of the Danish Resistance who took advantage of the confusion to release prisoners and remove as many of the records as they could find. One of those freed by the Resistance was a young Danish clergyman, Pastor Harald Sandbaek, who had been arrested by the Gestapo the previous September on charges of murder and sabotage. Interviewed after his escape, he spoke of how he was interrogated for long periods of time, the longest, some eight days after his arrest, lasting thirty-nine hours without rest, handcuffed the whole time. Soon, his interrogators became impatient and Pastor Sandbaek was tortured:

'Though many of the things that happened to me in recent weeks stand indelibly written in my memory, many details have already become blurred. One day's terror was greater than anything I would have thought possible a few days before, and yet some days later I was to be exposed to yet worse things. The bestiality of the Gestapo exceeds all description. . . .

'I was told that I had lied to the Gestapo, that I was a representative of the clergy hostile to the Germans and of the "Dansk Samling" and chief of a gang of murderers. I was interrogated by three Gestapo people and every third hour new Gestapo men took over. Finally I felt as though I was at the last gasp. I was taken back to the cells. I had just lain down on the bed when the key was put in the lock, and two sturdy young men came in and fetched me. I was taken to an office where the Gestapo chief Schwitzgebel, and his right-hand man, Werner, told me that this was my last chance to tell the truth and the whole truth. I declared that I had no more to say, after which those devils handed me over to the torturers, those young men who had fetched me. One was a German, the other a Dane. They half dragged and half carried me up to the attic of the college, took off all my clothes and put on new handcuffs. To these handcuffs a string was attached which could be tightened, and caused insufferable pain in the wrists. I was thrown over a bed and whipped with a leather dog whip. After some time they asked me if I would speak. I couldn't say yes, but after three whippings and tightening of the string, I could hold out no longer.'

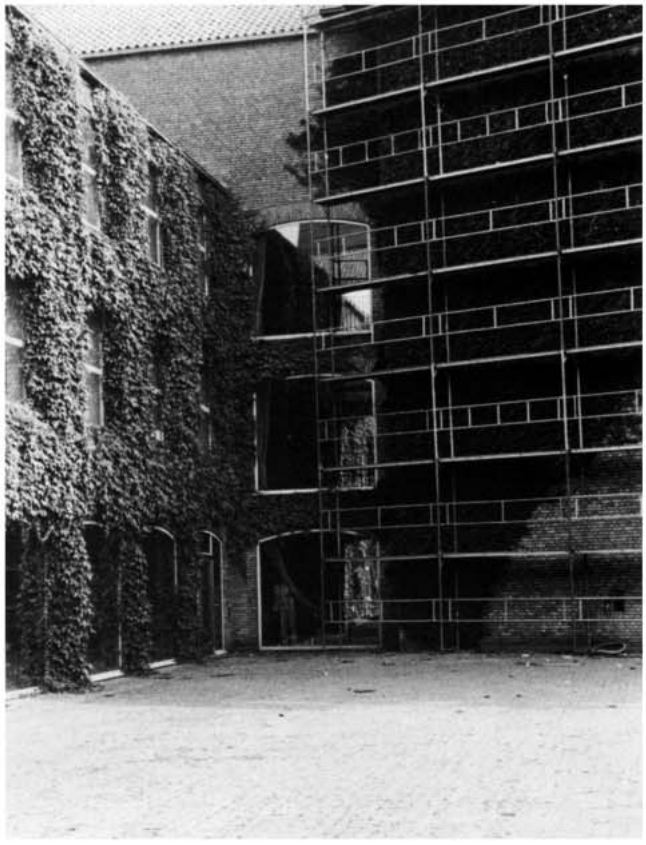
Pastor Sandbaek was taken back downstairs to the office to be fully interrogated by Werner and his two assistants. At this point, Sandbaek's salvation began as the raid commenced: 'Suddenly we heard the whine of the first exploding bomb while the planes thundered across the University. Werner's face was as pale as death from fright. He and his assistants ran out without thinking of me. I saw them run down a passage to the right and instinctively I went down to the left. This saved my life. Shortly afterwards, the whole building collapsed. Werner and his assistants were killed. I heard two bangs and everything went blank. When I woke again I was buried under bricks. I could move my right arm. Nearby me, I saw one of my torturers with his head crushed and a little way away a Dane cried "Oh God let me die". I tried to say the Lord's Prayer with him. I thought we would both die. They dug us out and laid us with other wounded men. Here again I lost consciousness. When I came to, I was

The University's main administration block lies on Ringgaden. While Mr Moller's bomb slid right through, another demolished the entrance.

This bomb plot, overlaid on a 544 Squadron photograph of March 27, 1945, clearly shows the spread of shot along the line of attack. (Crown Copyright/Keele University)

The barracks *(below)* on the opposite side of Lange Langsgade received at least eight hits, the repaired section being identified today by the different style of windows.

Colleges 1, 2 and 3 were used for telecommunications — they suffered less overall damage due to their stronger construction.



The main building was occupied ostensibly by the Deutsche Wochenschau newsreel organisation, but in reality by the Abwehr.

One bomb falling short completely demolished this private house on Chr. Richards veg, killing Mrs Paaski-Pedersen and her cat.

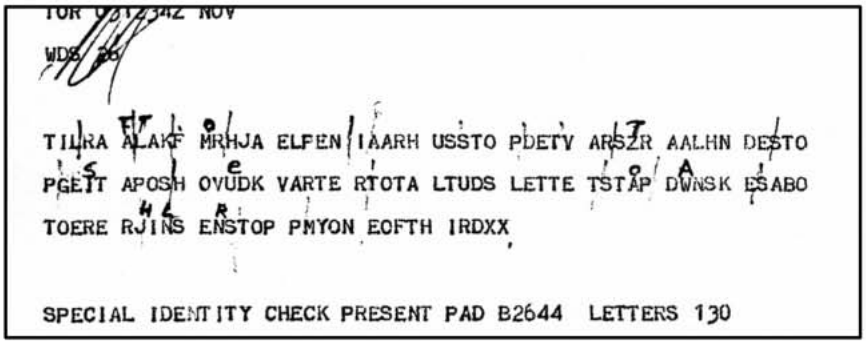
Left: **The aftermath. The shattered HQ block stands as a stark monument to an outstanding operation. The long revetments were used for Gestapo vehicles confiscated from the Danish police.** *Right:* **Our author, Bent Petersen at the attack's epicentre.**

surrounded by Danes. I begged them to give me a poison pill, as I would rather die than be taken by the Gestapo again, but they told me that I should not die and that I was among friends.'

Pastor Sandbaek managed to escape to Sweden, where in an interview on Swedish radio he described his experiences, from which the above extracts have been quoted.

After the initial flurry of telegrams and damage reports by the Danish underground, the Resistance chief in North Jutland sent the Air Ministry the following telegram on November 1:

> Gestapo Aarhus rpt Aarhus STOP. Killed Germans supposed to be about one hundred and fifty or one hundred sixty-five STOP. Killed Danes twenty or thirty STOP. Most of them informers STOP. All card indexes burnt STOP. We are very very thankful to you STOP.



TOR 0312342 NOV

WDS

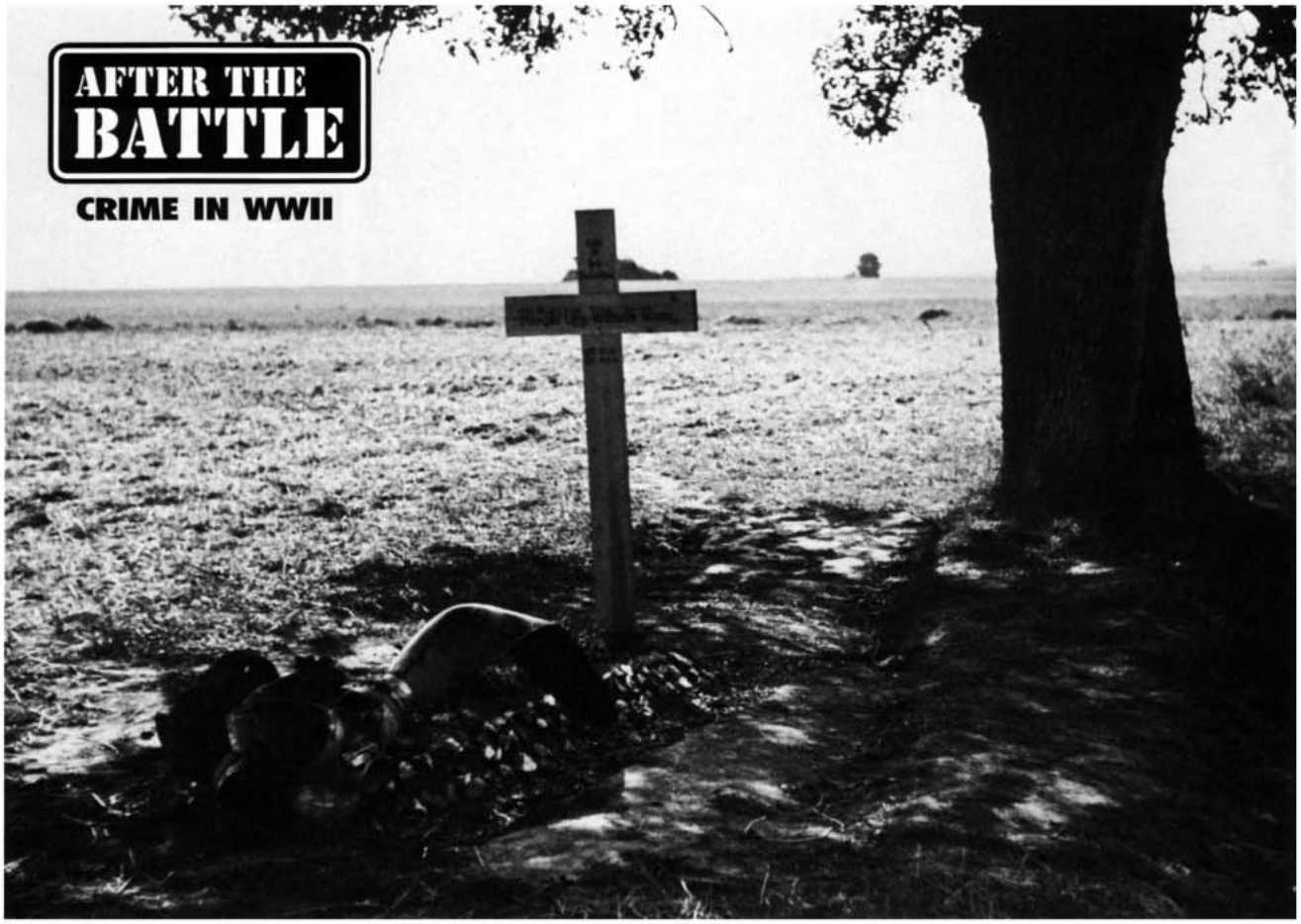
TILRA ALAKF MRHJA ELFEN IAARH USSTO PDETV ARSZR AALHN DESTO

PGETT APOSH OVUDK VARTE RTOTA LTUDS LETTE TSTAP DWNSK ESABO

TOERE RJINS ENSTOP PMYON EOFTH IRDXX

SPECIAL IDENTITY CHECK PRESENT PAD B2644 LETTERS 130

A coded message received by London from Denmark: 'To RAF. Thanks for support at Aarhus. It was magnificent. Gestapo HQ totally obliterated. The Danish saboteurs send greetings.' After the liberation surviving members of the three squadrons which took part returned to the University, this time at ground level to see for themselves the results of their handiwork.



SHOW TRIAL AT LUCHY

BY JEAN PAUL PALLUD

Monday, May 20, 1940 — ten days after the German attack in the west, things were going badly for the Allies. The French and British strategic manoeuvre, the left flank's advance into Belgium to form a defensive line along the Dyle, had turned out to be a trap, the Netherlands had been defeated and Belgium was about to ask for an armistice; Panzergruppe Kleist, the German spearhead, had broken through the right wing of the French 9ème Armée and its panzers were rushing westwards for the sea. While the French were making plans to re-establish contact with their 1ère Armèe and 9ème Armée isolated north of the German breakthrough, the British Expeditionary Force commander, Lord Gort, already contemplated the idea of evacuating the BEF, cut off with the two French armies, by sea. To the south, the 6ème Armée and 7ème Armée were hastily trying to create the 'Weygand Line' along the left flank of the German breakthrough.

On the afternoon of May 20, Heinkel He 111 bombers attacked Till airfield near Beauvais. The 5ème Escadrille of Groupe de Chasse III/3 was based there and a dozen Morane-Saulnier 406s scrambled to intercept the bombers and their escort of Messerschmitt Me 110s. A dog-fight soon raged between the German and French aircraft. Sergents Edouard Le Nigen, Lucien Jeannaud, André Bekarian and Jacques Casaneuve, shared a Messerchmitt Me 110 shot down near Beauvais and Sergent Le Nigen then shot down another Me 110 near Luchy, some fifteen kilometres to the north. Two Heinkel He 111s had also been accounted for, but Sergent Bekarian's MS 406 was hit and he parachuted safely to earth.

Under pressure from the Luftwaffe and threatened by the rapid advance of the Wehrmacht, the 5ème Escadrille had to leave its base near Beauvais on May 21 and moved to Cormeilles-en-Vexin. On May 24 Sergent Bekarian was shot down over the Somme battlefield in another Morane-Saulnier 406 and lost his life. The MS 406

Madame Valentine Mullot points to the sky at Rougemaison farm where she and her husband saw the German airmen descending on their parachutes. Grabbing his shotgun, Alfred Mullot hurried towards the spot where they would land, the Messerschmitt having crashed a few hundred metres further east.

The road was crowded with refugees fleeing south, intermingled with men of the French Army. The two crewmen — one of whom was wounded — were surrounded and brought to this spot at the side of the road, at which point a French NCO appeared, pulled out his pistol and immediately shot the uninjured pilot, Unteroffizier Wilhelm Ross, through the head.

was already obsolete in May 1940, being somewhat unreliable and having insufficient firepower, and the escadrille converted to the much more effective Dewoitine 520 the next day (too late for André Bekarian). The Dewoitine 520 was capable of meeting the much vaunted Messerschmitt Me 109 on equal terms, but by then the war in France was anyway destined to run its course.

The Messerschmitt Me 110 shot down by Sergent Le Nigen on May 20 had crashed at about 6.00 p.m. by the Amiens-Beauvais road near Luchy. It was an Me 110C which belonged to the 9. Staffel, III. Gruppe, Zerstörer-Geschwader 26.

From Luchy, the villagers saw the aircraft heading for the ground and two parachutes drifting down south of the village. From the yard of his farm at the nearly hamlet of Rougemaison, Alfred Mullot saw the parachutes too and decided to go and take a look. Although his wife, Valentine, implored him to leave his shotgun at home, he took it and walked across the fields in the direction of the crash. A few days earlier, the Mayor of the village of Luchy had made known that the Préfecture had ordered that the villagers were to guard the railway line west of the village against possible sabotage by members of the Fifth Column (the '5ème Colonne'). Armed only with their shotguns, local men had spent several nights guarding the line but had not encountered any Fifth Columnists. Seeing a couple of parachutes coming down so near to his home, Alfred Mullot felt it his duty to go and apprehend the men.

The aircraft had crashed a few hundred metres east of the road and the two airmen had come down in a field just the other side, between the road and Rougemaison. The road was crowded with refugees fleeing in the face of the German invasion and with units of the French Army withdrawing southwards, some of them in good order, others merely bunches of stragglers separated from their units. Among the latter was Sergent-Chef Georges Maurouard, from the 106ème Régiment d'Artillerie, who had fought for five days on the Meuse at Nouzonville before being ordered to withdraw. He was captured but escaped and after five more epic days had found himself moving south on that road, trying to find an officer in a position to issue him with orders. Approaching Rougemaison he saw a group of men, both civilians and soldiers, bringing the two German airmen from the field to the road; one of them, tall and blond, was uninjured but the other was in bad shape, bleeding badly, and had to be carried. Suddenly, from the mob on the road, a French NCO drew his pistol and shot the uninjured one in the head, killing him instantly. Georges Maurouard protested angrily but for most of the people there, the majority of them refugees who had fled from Belgium and the north of France and who had suffered from the strafing and bombing of the crowded roads by German aircraft, it was only what those 'child murderers' deserved. Georges Maurouard suddenly felt himself in great danger of being shot as a member of the '5eme Colonne', but his intervention probably saved the other airman.

Alfred Mullot did not know anything of all this when he reached the road. There were about two hundred people then in the vicinity of the crash, some locals but a lot of them having happened to stop and look for a while as they passed by. He saw the wreck of the aircraft, the body of the airman lying by the

When Monsieur Mullot reached the road a crowd had gathered around the two Germans — one of whom he could see was dead. He helped carry the wounded man to a car before returning to his farm. For all intents and purposes that might well have been the end of the affair; at a time when life was cheap there would have been little concern for the death of one German, let alone an airman of the Luftwaffe then harrying the refugee columns with guns and bombs. Indeed a couple of days later the Mullot family became refugees themselves, leaving their farm to stay with friends further south. Only after they returned two months later did the repercussions of Monday, May 20 begin. With the country now under German rule, the background to the isolated grave beside the road was under investigation and Alfred Mullot was implicated as being there at the time with a firearm. He was taken to Luchy town hall for interrogation *(above)* by a Luftwaffe judical officer — an Oberkriegsgerichtsrat (note the pips instead of wings on his collar). A Feldgendarme (in helmet) looks on.

Accused of the killing, Monsieur Mullot was brought before a military court set up in front of the church at Luchy, presided over by the Oberkriegsgerichtsrat. Taking notes at the end of the table is a Kriegsgerichtsinspektor. The accused stands between two Feldgendarmes (police eagle on sleeve and gorgets around neck).

road and two parachutes abandoned in the field; he helped to carry the wounded crewman to the car that was to take him to hospital at Beauvais and then returned to his farm. When his wife asked him 'Did you get them?', he merely answered, 'No, that was done already'.

On May 23, the pilot of the Messerschmitt Me 110, Unteroffizier Wilhelm Ross, was buried by the side of the road, and a few days later the military situation had become so catastrophic for the Allies that civilians had to be evacuated to the rear. The Mullot family left Luchy southwards in the direction of Culan, south of Bourges in the Département du Cher, where they had some friends; Alfred Mullot drove one car, his wife another, taking their four children and three other people to relative safety.

A few weeks later, the war was lost. Towards the end of July, the family drove back without incident to their home at Luchy; the Germans were everywhere now. When they arrived at Luchy on July 30, they found that one of the farm workers had taken the opportunity to install himself in their home, and had caused some damage, particularly in the cellar, from which dozens of bottles had already disappeared. A violent argument ensued and Alfred Mullot sacked the man, who went off angrily uttering threats. The incident over, the Mullot family got on with their lives as before.

On August 2, a party of Germans drove onto the farm, accompanied by a female interpreter, asking for Alfred Mullot and explaining that they had come to 'take him to the Mairie to ask him some questions', though neither he nor anyone in the village had the slightest idea as to what those questions might be. They took him away immediately, but drove not to the village Mairie but to the Kommandantur at Beauvais. There he learnt that he was accused of having killed Wilhelm Ross. The Germans told him that they knew he had been there with a rifle and that the airman had been killed by a bullet. He pointed out the fact that he had a shotgun and not a rifle but this made no difference. Although he had no proof of it, Alfred Mullot came to the conclusion that his farm worker, the one he had sacked a few weeks earlier, must have pointed the finger at him. After a few days at Beauvais, he was transferred to Gand in Belgium.

Early in September he was taken back to Beauvais. On September 12, after being given back his own suit, which had been cleaned up and well pressed, he was taken to Luchy for trial in the village square before a German Military Court. Although the German authorities had given the event some publicity the day before, hoping many people would come along, the village was deserted that day. Alfred Mullot had refused a German suggestion that he call his wife as a witness, and he was on his own in front of a number of German officers, most of them from the Luftwaffe. The injured airman, Ross's machine gunner, attended as a witness, walking with the aid of a stick since he had not yet fully recovered from his leg

Where a man was once on trial for his life — without the photographs to prove it who could imagine a more unlikely spot.

Ross's injured gunner, now recovered sufficiently to walk with the aid of a stick, was present to give evidence and in spite of the fact that he could not recognise the accused as being the murderer, Alfred Mullot was sentenced to death. In October 1940 it was commuted to five years' imprisonment with hard labour but the following year he was set free. Returning to Luchy, he died in January 1980, being buried in the family plot at Lachaussée, 3 kilometres east of Luchy.

wounds. The Mayor of Luchy, Monsieur Léon Floury, was there, and his son and two other civilians. A German photographer by the name of Richter was present to take pictures, some of which would appear in a leaflet dated September 20 which was dropped in the area and branded Alfred Mullot a guerilla fighter: 'Franc-Tireur faces Court Martial'.

The German airman did not identify Alfred Mullot, saying he did not recognise him; the Mayor confirmed for the court that he had received instructions from the Préfecture requesting that men be armed to guard the railways but, either because he had never really received such an order or out of sheer fear of the occupying power, he failed to produce it in court from the Town Hall. One of the civilians (he was not from the village and today nobody is able to name him) confirmed that Alfred Mullot had gone to the crash site with his 'rifle'. That was partly true; and evidence of that sort went gravely against the accused. The Germans spent no time in checking whether Wilhelm Ross had been killed by a bullet or by shotgun pellets, and within an hour justice was done and Alfred Mullot was condemned to death. Whether they were convinced of his guilt or were looking for a propaganda coup come what may, it is impossible to tell.

At the end of the trial, he asked to be taken back to his house to obtain some clothes. This was agreed and German soldiers went with him and his wife into their room as they did so. Madame Mullot asked her husband what he had been told was going to happen to him, but knowing how difficult it would be to break it to his wife that he would never be coming back, he decided on a white lie and just answered, 'I could not understood what they were saying; they all spoke in German. I will certainly not be back before the end of the war.' And with that, they parted.

Madame Mullot, who was still ignorant of what had happened, sensed that there was something odd about the way the people were behaving forwards her in the village, as if everybody was trying to comfort her but fled from her at the same time. She then went to the Kommandantur at Beauvais, where she was abruptly informed, 'But Madame, your husband has been condemned to death!' After hearing that, she fought to save her husband, going to the Préfecture, to the Bishop at Beauvais, and to the Commission d'Armistice in Paris, explaining that her husband had not shot the airman.

Alfred Mullot had been returned to Gand and in early October the death sentence was commuted to five years' hard labour: the Germans were very likely aware by this time that he was innocent of the crime but it was not possible for them to simply acknowledge the fact. He was then transferred to a jail at Rheinbach in Germany.

Dejected at being confined to a cell, he asked if he could be sent out to work somewhere, and in June 1941 he was put onto farm labour by day, returning to his cell for the night. Five months went by; then at the end of December, when he arrived back at the camp from work one day, he was called into the office and told, 'Alfred Mullot, you will not go to work tomorrow, you will be freed!' There was no apparent reason for this decision other than the fact that the Germans, now convinced of his innocence, had decided to free him with the greatest possible discretion. Back at Luchy for the end of the year, he was at home for Christmas and went on to live out the three more years of occupation without any further trouble.

If Alfred Mullot ever reproached the Mayor of Luchy for having done little to help him with the Germans, he was wise enough to put such thoughts out of his mind when the village was liberated in 1944. In the same way, he decided to do nothing to try to avenge himself against the man he thought had delivered him up to the Germans; the fact that this man was by then in a bad way because his son was in a concentration camp somewhere in Germany may well have prompted Monsieur Mullot to feel that he had suffered enough and that the man had already received his just deserts.

The air gunner, unfortunately unnamed, returns to the roadside grave. Later Wilhelm Ross was moved to Beauvais where a German War cemetery was established in 1942. Today he lies among 1,597 of his countrymen in Block 2, Row 4 Grave 101 *(see back cover)*. **The contemporary photographs, taken by Propaganda Kriegsberichter Richter, are now in the ECP Armées collection in Paris.**

UFFZ·WILHELM
ROSS
27·1·17 + 20·5·40
GEFR·HERBERT
GRAF
30·5·06 + 11·6·40